

THE
WAY TO LOSE HIM;
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
MISS WYNDHAM.

By the AUTHOR of the
WAY TO PLEASE HIM.

VOL. II.

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WAY TO ROSE HILL

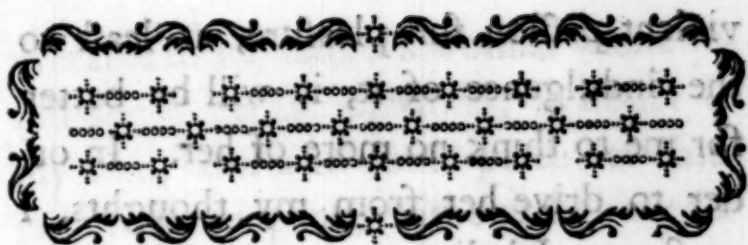
WAY TO ROSE HILL

VOL. II

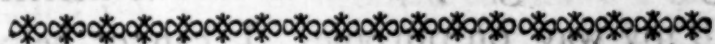
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T H E
WAY TO LOSE HIM.



L E T T E R XLIX.

SIR EDWARD DEERHURST TO SIR GEORGE
BARTON.

✱✱✱✱ Have so far conquered my pas-
✱ I ✱ sion for Harriet, that I can see
✱✱✱✱ her without much emotion;
yet, I will confess I wish that things had
not been carried with so high a hand be-
tween us; but it is all *her* fault: if she
will not, or cannot set bounds to her

VOL. II.

B

violent

violent passion for pleasure, at least to the indulgence of it, it will be better for me to think no more of her. In order to drive her from my thoughts, I must not, I believe, come in her sight: but then I must either leave London, or shut myself up in my own house; for I certainly see her wherever I go, and begin to imagine, that she throws herself in my way on purpose. I cannot help fancying that she really loves me; she evidently loves her own humour better, or she would have readily changed a conduct which she found so very disagreeable to me: Why then will she take pains to renew a connection, which can never be attended with mutual satisfaction, because it can never be a suitable one, so opposite are our tempers. Disappointed, however, as I am, I will wish that I could meet with the sort of woman agreeable

greeable to my taste: a woman whose relish for domestic pleasures, is equal to my own, and who could place her chief joy in *my* company, without sighing for a crowd. I have a thousand times blamed myself, for not having made my addresses to Miss Hume, instead of paying them to Miss Wyndham: She is quite the kind of woman to make a desirable wife; but she is, undoubtedly, engaged to Sir Charles, tho' it is not publicly known that she is so. She is the most amiable creature in the world: had I seen her first, I had never thought of Harriet. I sometimes think, that I will endeavour to find out, whether I have guessed right or not: yet it will be a difficult matter for me to continue my acquaintance with her, without putting it into Harriet's power to renew an intimacy

4 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

timacy which can never, I believe, be productive of any real felicity.

I have not seen Miss Hume in publick since my last interview with Harriet, neither with Lady Wyndham, nor with her daughter: the latter was at the opera, last night. The weather is almost too warm for a theatre, but I am, you know, extravagantly fond of musick; I find a pleasing mistress in it; nothing sooner lulls my mind to peace, when it has been ruffled, than musick.

I went early to the Hay-market. I was quite lost in attention to a very pathetic air by Gulielmi, when Miss Wyndham came into the box next to me, followed by the two Wilkinsons.

She saw me immediately, her colour changed: instantly turning to Bell Wilkinson, who was making a prodigious noise, in order to be more taken notice of,

of, I suppose, they were all hushed in a moment, and sat down as quietly, as if there had not been a man in the house to look at them.

I will frankly own that I was pleased with this decorum in Harriet, and could not help, now and then, stealing a glance that way, to see how she went on. I not only observed her, but the giddy Bell who watched my motions.

When the performance was over, I hurried out, but was stopped by a particular friend: by him I was detained, I dare say, a full quarter of an hour.

When he left me, I passed the box in which I had seen Harriet and Bell. They were both coming out. I drew back; made a cool bow, and let Harriet go on. She seemed to move very reluctantly. Bell, going to follow her, dropped her fan. I could not avoid stooping for it.

6 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

She addressed her acknowledgments to me for my civility, in such grateful and elegant terms, that I was insensibly impelled to offer my hand to lead her through the crowd. She gave me hers with visible satisfaction, and made the most apt, judicious remarks on the music, performers, &c. &c. I really wished for an opportunity to prolong the conversation, yet I think Bell is as little suitable to me as Harriet. She is wild, but her wildness is not the wildness of uncultivated nature: it is the affected vivacity of an artful flirt. However, she is generally called, a fine girl, she has, certainly a great deal of common sense, the most useful sort of sense in the world: but then, she does not appear capable of that softening tenderness which Harriet really feels, or which she can so readily assume, and which gave
her

her a thousand charms in my enraptured eyes. Harriet can make herself exquisitely pleasing; and had she conducted herself with the least propriety, I should have doated on her to an excess, which might have been attended with bad consequences to us both. I might have been quite enervated with my fondness for her, and she might have been entirely ruined, by the indiscreetness of my indulgences. 'Tis better, therefore, as it is; 'tis best, I am sure for *me* to think so. Your sentiments on this occasion, will most probably coincide with those of,

Your ever sincere friend,

E. D.

8 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

LETTER L.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

YOU have not answered my last, nor assisted me in supporting a resolution which begins to give way already, and will soon yield to the tenderness I feel for Deerhurst: I fancied, at first, that I should be capable of detaching myself from him, with great indifference, as I thought him so glaringly in the wrong; but it will not do. I repine not only at the loss of him, considered in a lucrative light, but I remember, with regret, the delightful moments I past with him, when he seemed to live for *me* alone: But I cannot relinquish every pleasure, to enjoy that single one. What a preposterous request! I wonder how he can desire such a sacrifice. 'Tis a strange thing that
men

men will be so unreasonable! and yet if he should actually marry any other woman, I shall never bear it. The very idea is utterly insupportable. He does not seem to keep up any connection with Fanny Hume: indeed, she is gone again to Luton: she was sent for, as Mrs. Hume was taken ill. My brother is gone after her.—That is a mighty odd attachment.

IN CONTINUATION.

Astonishing! Here has been my Lord H——, to wait on my mother. On what account do you imagine? not on mine, (tho' such a supposition would be natural enough;) but to enquire after this Fanny Hume, with the most honourable designs. Amazing! what unaccountable luck some people have! He met with her upon the road, and was so struck with her figure—only think of that

10 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

that—and the uncommon propriety of her behaviour to him—what an *uncommon* creature she is!—as to resolve to venture to attach himself to her for life. What preposterous fancies men are liable to! That such a girl as Fanny, should be preferred to *me*! Lord H—— has both seen and conversed with me, and never discovered any particular sensations. I never was more surpris'd. My mother, you know, could not refuse her consent: but *Miss* is not come to town, and so I suppose his impatience will carry him after her. Surely this affair will quite turn the girl's head: we shall have her giving herself a thousand airs upon such a conquest, and those airs will, perhaps, make his Lordship repent: for the men are grown so whimsical, that they cannot bear to see us amuse ourselves with any thing but *them*. You had
mon-

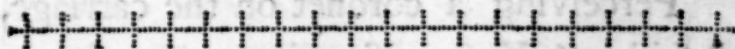
monstrous good fortune, Charlotte, when you married, to meet with a man who would let you do what you pleased: there are no such men to be got now.—Deerhurst, at least, will never be such a one. Lord H—— *may* perhaps.—I would give the world to find the former as eager, as constant a lover as the latter promises to be: but I have absolutely lost him. To increase my vexation, this Fanny will marry a man of the first fashion. A little insignificant girl, whom my mother kept of mere charity, will take place of *me* every where, even should I regain Deerhurst's affections. It will be no easy matter, I am afraid, to bring my lover back: however, I will set heartily about it: for I find, that as I am so near losing him for ever, I really love him to a violent degree. If I cannot keep him to myself he will be seized by somebody or

other. Bell Wilkinson has a great mind to flirt with him a little: so seriously indeed is she in earnest about an establishment, that I believe, if she was sure he was entirely disengaged, she would ask him the question herself, rather than miss an opportunity of marrying advantageously. Fanny's having such a lover as Lord H—— will make all the girls wild with envy. The Wilkinsons are in a horrid fuss already; that is, they are hurt to think, that such a girl should make her fortune before *them*, as they look upon themselves to be every way superior to *her*: tho' they would not be sorry to see her Lady H——, if their pride did not disturb them: for Clara has no hopes of my brother, and saucy Bell sets her cap at *my* Sir Edward: *mine*, he still shall be, or I will give up all pretensions to person,

person, understanding, money, merit, or indeed any influence at all over the fellow: I cannot think I have quite lost him, as Wilkinson tells me that I am handsomer and handsomer every hour. I do not depend upon all he says. My fortune, were I as ugly as a hag, would render me all over charming in the eyes of an Irish ensign, with nothing but his pay for his subsistence—You don't know how transported the young adventurer is with the smiles of

Your ever affectionate

H. W.



LETTER LI.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

I Have been in an agony since I wrote last. Could I have believed that the
person

person I saw with Fanny was Lord H——? Still more was I surprised when he came down in his post-chariot and four bays, adorned for conquest.

We were all sitting in the parlour next to the road: the girls were at work: I was talking to Mrs. Hume. An uncommon equipage alarmed the whole family.

Fanny, who is pretty quick-sighted, turned pale when she saw Lord H—— get out.

“What can he want *now*,” cried she: “I am not personally acquainted with him.”

Perceiving a coronet on the carriage, I said, “Your visiter is a man of quality then, Fanny?”

She blushed: her mother called to the servant to shew the gentleman into the best parlour: she then went to him by herself, to know his business.

She

She soon returned, and with a visible agitation, said, "Fanny, this Gentle-
 * man, Lord H——, is the person who
 " got into the chaise with you; he is
 " come to ask my consent to make his
 " addressee to you: I therefore desire
 " you will prepare yourself to attend
 " him immediately."

Fanny's colour and confusion increased: but *her* confusion was nothing to what *I* felt. She turned her eyes towards me directly. With the greatest emotion I caught her hand.—"My dear
 " Fanny," said I, "stop a single moment, and consider before you doom
 " me to perpetual misery—What
 " inducement can you have to accept
 " of Lord H——'s offer rather than
 " mine? You can hardly love him on so
 " short an acquaintance: nor can *he* feel
 " for

“for you, instantaneously, a passion so
 “violent, so faithful as mine. Oh!
 “Fanny, if you have the least pity in
 “that dear, gentle bosom, spare me the
 “anguish I must necessarily endure in
 “knowing you lost to *me* for ever.”

I could not articulate another syllable.
 My utterance was quite suspended by the
 perturbation which the suddenness of
 the event occasioned.

She turned back and looked at me
 with a kind of affectionate concern, and
 replied, “Do not be alarmed, Sir Charles:
 “you may be perfectly easy with regard
 “to *me*. I shall not accept of Lord
 “H——’s offer.”

She then broke, hastily, from me, but
 soon came back.

I was alone, walking up and down the
 room, greatly agitated.

“There,

"There," said she, with a smile, clapping her hand in mine, which I held out to her, "it is all over."

"Thou dearest girl," answered I, pressing her to my bosom, "what method did you take to decline so considerable an offer?"

"I only told my Lord the truth," replied she: "I told him that my heart was already engaged, and that it was, therefore, impossible for me to accept of the honour he intended me."

"And to whom, my Fanny," cried I, impatiently; "to whom is your heart engaged; who is in possession of so invaluable a treasure?"

"There you must excuse me," replied she, with a rosy blush which covered her whole face and neck, while she hastily turned from me.

I strove

I strove to detain her: I strove to force this secret from her, in the disclosure of which I was so much interested, but to no purpose: I was so much disconcerted by her concealment, that I became restless and unhappy: so much agitated was I indeed, that she told me I could not have been well more displeased with her, if she had actually accepted of Lord H——.

I replied, that I could not but be wretched while I had no hopes of making the desired impression on her heart: adding, that while she continued cold and indifferent to me, I should be as unhappy as if she had given it to Lord H——.

She made me no answer: she remained silent during the greatest part of the day. I was silent also: I neither ate nor drank: the whole family, indeed, seemed
to

to be discontented by the appearance of my Lord among them. Mrs. Hume, I believe, would have been glad if her daughter had not rejected him: and I am far from being satisfied, because she has still a concealed favourite: nor is Fanny herself pleased, because I complain. You cannot, therefore, expect any entertaining epistles, at present, from

Your sincere friend

C. W.



LETTER LII.

From the same to the same.

I Do not know what to make of this dear, unaccountable girl. I told you, in my last, that I was quite disconcerted at hearing Fanny own she had an attachment: a considerable one, I thought,

thought, beyond a doubt, as it obliged her to refuse Lord H——'s offers.

The next morning she came to me before breakfast, asked me how I did, and added, that she hoped I had not made a resolution to starve myself: "I hope," continued she, "that you are ready for your breakfast."

"When the mind is disordered," answered I, "the body generally sympathises. While I know that you are in love with another man, I can enjoy nothing."

"How silly that is!" said she; "if I treat you with esteem and regard, why need you be uneasy about me? To convince you that you have no reason to be so, I do assure you sincerely, Sir Charles, that there is not a man in the world for whom I have so thorough an esteem."

"Esteem

"Esteem is too cold an expression,"
I replied: "it is impossible for me to
live upon *that*: you must love me, or
I must be unhappy."

"Indeed, Sir Charles," said she, "you
do not act consistently with the good-
ness of your understanding: I am you
reasonable in desiring to oblige me to
love you? I should hate to compel any
body to any thing, as much as to be
compelled: besides, love is a volun-
tary thing, it cannot be forced."

"Too well I know it," replied I, sigh-
ing.

"Pshaw!—now you are quite in the
vapours again," said she: "Do you
think I shall be won by sighs, and de-
jection? nothing upon earth can be, in
my opinion, more disgusting."

"Every thing is disgusting from *me*,
I fear"—said I.

"Indeed

"Indeed you wrong yourself — so
" far from it, I do not know a man in
" the world half so agreeable, as you
" would be, if you would lay aside
" your distrust, and melancholy."

"I am ready to lay them aside for ever,"
replied I; "if you will make me easy,
" by giving me some hopes of being
" happy: but while you own that ano-
" ther is master of your heart, I can-
" not conquer my discontent: I cannot
" be happy: it is impossible."

"Well!" answered she, after a little he-
sitation, "but cannot you suppose, that
" what I said was only a decent apology
" for my refusing Lord H——?"

"Could I but suppose *that*!"
"Do, Sir Charles," cried she, with
the most insinuating softness; "do
" suppose any thing to make yourself
" easy: you cannot think how much
" pleasure

“pleasure it will give me, to see you
“restored to your wonted tranquility:
“do, pray try to oblige me;” continued
she smiling so charmingly in my face,
that I thought there was even tender-
ness expressed in her looks.

Eagerly folding her in my arms,
I replied,—“Promise me, then, to try
“to return my love.”

“I will,” said she, blushing, while I
seized a kiss: She did not repulse me,
she even left me, I thought, with re-
luctance. All the day afterwards, when
her eyes met mine, which they fre-
quently did, there was a delicious
languor in them, that melted my
soul. Nothing, however, I could
say, was sufficient to prevail on her
to give me another day at Luton.
She insisted upon coming to London,
saying, that as Lord H— had told
her

her he had been with my mother, she ought to give *her* an account of her conduct.—To provoke me farther, she also *would* come to town in the stage, letting me ride in the post-chaise by myself. “We shall look particular,” said she, “by being always together: people will talk.”

“Let them talk,” replied I; “they can only talk of what I wish, of what I am ready to realize the moment you will permit me.”

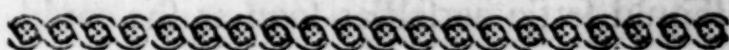
“Ay—but *I* am not so ready.”

She then broke from me, with a vivacity which, in spite of all her powers of pleasing, made me half angry. Yet as I found she would be quite vexed if I went in the stage with her, I was obliged to submit. I went, therefore, in my own carriage, *alone*: tho’ I could not help cursing her

her capriciousness, and fancying that she had some scheme to carry on of which I was to be kept in ignorance. I cannot make any discoveries, but I have ordered *Will* to watch her very closely. This torturing suspense almost deprives me of my senses. Sir Edward must certainly be the man whom she loves; for Harriet and he have fallen out again. This new quarrel gives new hopes to Fanny, and certain despair to,

Your ever-faithful,

C. W.



LETTER LIII.

MISS WYNDHAM to MRS. CROFTS.

WOULD any body believe it possible! This ridiculous girl, this Fanny Hume, whose sense, and discretion, and conduct are so much admired,

VOL. II.

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has

has actually refused Lord H——, a man with whom half the women in town would, most gladly, be connected, upon less eligible terms, than those which he offered to *her*: What an idiot! surely the Girl must be absolutely distracted to refuse such an overture. When I told the Wilkinsons, they screamed with surprise—they could scarce believe me, indeed—My Lord's offer was almost as incredible as the girl's refusal. My mother, who is still monstrously partial to Fanny, called her a fool, and told her that every prudent young person should settle herself as soon as she could.—Such an astonishing offer should have been immediately closed with, added she.—Astonishing indeed! she stood it out it seems, that her own judgment was superior to any body's. I really wonder at my Lady's patience with her,
I wonder

I wonder how she can suffer her to talk such nonsense; but my mother is of an easy temper, consequently to be easily imposed upon. I dare say the girl keeps herself for somebody else: my brother, or Deerhurst: yet if Charles was the man, he might marry her at once: Deerhurst, therefore, must be the favourite. She shall not, however, have *him*. Bell Wilkinson says, that Sir Edward cannot be the man, because Lord H—— must have been a greater match: but there is nothing in that: Deerhurst is exquisitely handsome, there is a something about his eyes that almost makes amends for his particularities.—Could I keep his heart, and, at the same time, make him the man I wish him to be!—If *I* cannot, Fanny Hume never shall have him:

yet I see no hopes of his ever returning to,

Your faithful,

H. W.



LETTER LIV.

SIR EDWARD DEERHURST to SIR GEORGE
BARTON.

MISS Hume is the most amiable of women: she has refused Lord H—, who made her the most honourable, and advantageous offer. She told his Lordship, that, as she could not feel any particular inclination for him, she would not injure him by the acceptance of his generous proposals. When my Lord pressed for time and opportunity, in order to make himself agreeable to her, she replied, that her heart was not her own.

What

What a noble frankness! how I admire her! I would, this moment, make her the best proposals in my power, were I not sensible that I must expect the same answer which his Lordship received. Sir Charles is the man for whom she reserves herself: I have told him so, for we meet sometimes in publick: but he assures me that he is not so happy: yet, as she has declared her inclinations to be engaged, to what purpose should I make any overtures, as they will certainly be rejected? I will wait a little; perhaps she may, tho' she has no *apparent* lover, encourage a favoured admirer in private: perhaps, too, something may happen to prevent her union with him. By staying away from Lady Wyndham's, I know not how things go on there: the discontinuance of my visits to that house, may, however,

ever, be servicable to me in the end. I might only be tantalized with false hopes by the renewal of them. As to Harriet, I have entirely given up all thoughts of her. I am convinced that it is hardly possible for her to make a change in her sentiments sufficient to render me happy. I cannot think of attaching myself for life to a woman who shews not the least desire to conform to the taste of,

Your unfashionable friend,

E. D.



LETTER LV.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

DO you never intend to leave Paris? do you never intend to come among us again? I am absolutely half-dead for want of you. I can make nothing of Deerhurst; and Wilkinson grows

grows so pressing, that I really do not know what to do with him. I try to engage him with Fanny Hume, on purpose to keep her out of the way of Sir Edward; but if she could refuse Lord H——, to be sure she will not listen to Wilkinson, who indeed has told me often that he cannot endure her, and that I was always his taste: he is a flattering creature, yet he is almost as handsome as Deerhurst. In short, I like them both very well; Sir Edward for his title, fortune, and connections; and Wilkinson to follow me, to flatter me, and to be always ready when I want a pretty fellow to attend me: he seems to be extremely fit for the purpose: in short, I should like Deerhurst for a husband, and Wilkinson for a *Cecisbeo*: the former, I am certain, will never do long alone; he will, indeed, be weary

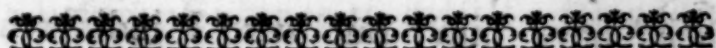
of dangling, long before he is married : and then I shall want a man to flirt with : now Wilkinson is the very thing : tho' I believe he had rather make his own terms : but I know too well my own value, to throw myself, and my fortune, away upon an Irish Ensign, with nothing ; I may, therefore, trifle with Wilkinson, but I would not have him suppose, that I can ever think of marrying him : but there is no making men just what one would have them. As I can be in no dangerous situation with Wilkinson, I may amuse myself, and indulge him sometimes with a little foolery to kill time, when Sir Edward is out of humour : besides, by flirting with Wilkinson, I may, perhaps, bring Deerhurst to himself again. As he took it into his wife head to be jealous without any reason at all, it will be

be best to let him have something for his jealousy to work upon. I dare say you will approve of this mode of proceeding, having played a similar game with great success.

I am,

Yours, very affectionately,

H. W.



LETTER LVI.

Miss FANNY HUME to Mrs. HUME.

HOW kind were you, my dearest Madam, to permit me to follow my own inclination in refusing a man whom I could not love! But will you not assist me also in conquering my too tender esteem—an esteem I ought not to indulge—for him whom I prefer to all men in the world? It is, indeed, with the greatest difficulty that I conceal the affectionate sentiments which his insinuating behaviour, and

constant attachment to me, excite in my bosom: And yet I cannot prevail upon myself to make an ungrateful return to the generous treatment which I have ever received from Lady Wyndham, tho' she has severely chid me for refusing Lord H——: nay, she has peremptorily told me that I *must*, and *shall* have him: but were I indifferent about myself, I could not bear to think of the uneasiness which Sir Charles would endure, upon my taking such a step. If I am not destined to make him happy, let me not make him wretched.—I am afraid I *shall* make him so. You will think me very vain, Madam, to talk in this manner; but I hourly receive so many proofs of his tender regard for me, that I sometimes find myself almost incapable of behaving to him with the reserve, which is, I am certain,

certain, necessary to keep him from discovering what passes in my heart. I even, sometimes, fear that he will find me out in spite of all my caution.

Lady Wyndham talked to me a great deal yesterday about Lord H——. Finding that nothing she said could move me to be of *her* opinion, in a point of so much consequence to myself; she added —“ The girl’s head is turned, I verily believe: would any creature, Fanny, think it possible for you to refuse such a man as Lord H——?”

“ Your Ladyship knows that I cannot love him.”

“ Love him? love him?” replied she, —“ romantic nonsense! What woman in her senses ever desired to *love* her husband? Indeed, girl, I am quite ashamed of you; all the pains I have taken with you have been thrown away:

“you are absolutely incorrigible. I’ll lay my life that you have got some fellow in your head.”

Just at that moment, Sir Charles came into the room.

“What’s the matter?” said he: perceiving my face in a glow.

“Matter?” answered my Lady, half-angry with me; “why she is in love with some ridiculous man or other, or she would never be so silly as to reject Lord H——.” With those words she left us.

“Are you indeed in love, Fanny?” said Sir Charles, with a tender seriousness in his manner which touched me—“Who is the man that has been able to make an impression upon your heart? but I need not ask. Sir Edward Deerhurst is the man.”

“Indeed, indeed, he is not,” replied I, eagerly; “nor Lord H——, nor Captain Wilkinson.” “Nor

“Nor *me*—?” added Sir Charles.

“Nor *you*—” said I, forcing a smile, and hastily turning away my face, lest the real truth should appear in it.

Sir Charles then seizing both my hands, cried, “Nay, Fanny, I am sure one of “us is the favoured man.”

I could scarce hide the sensations of my heart any longer, so closely did he watch my looks.

I begin to think that he believes me less indifferent about him than I pretend to be. An occurrence which happened soon afterwards, will but confirm the conjectures which he entertains favourable to himself.

Having staid a considerable time in my Lady's dressing-room, trying to persuade me to confess who my favourite was, he affected me so much, that I felt unable to deceive him any longer: I therefore

therefore pleaded business in my own apartment, and went up stairs.

In a short time afterwards, I thought I heard Mrs. Fletcher exclaim — “ Sir Charles is hurt.”

Frighted at those terrifying words, I flew down stairs, hastily asking, all the way, what was the matter.

Sir Charles hurried to meet me. He caught hold of my hands.

“ You look pale, Fanny.”

I was indeed ready to faint.

“ What has alarmed you?”

Quite thrown off my guard, I forgot that I had any thing to conceal. Laying the hand which I had at liberty on his shoulder, and looking at him in a manner which expressed, I am afraid, the feelings of my heart, I said, “ Where are you hurt, Sir Charles? What has happened to you?”

“ Nothing,

“Nothing, my dearest girl,” replied he, with a look which significantly seemed to say, “Have I found you out at last?” and declared, at the same time, the highest satisfaction.

I felt myself quite abashed. He then related the cause of the mistake.

My Lady’s perroquet had got out of the cage, and Mrs. Fletcher had asked him, on his having caught it, whether it was hurt or not:—I trembled so that I could not stand.

“Sit down,” said he, “and confess, “that if you do not feel that tenderness “which I sigh to behold in you for me, “you were, at least, concerned at my “supposed danger.”

I was all confusion, my dearest mother; I felt my face and neck hot and cold by turns. I shook as if I had got an ague. I strove to speak, but could
not

not for some time. Sir Charles hung over me, begging me to be composed, and to tell him what was the real cause of my agitation. The tender emotions which he discovered, added to the terrors I had felt on his account, quite softened my heart. I could not resolve to continue to refuse always his earnest request, as his happiness seemed to depend upon my compliance with it: neither could I bring myself to act a mean part: I, therefore, contented myself with asking him if he thought I could hear that he was in any danger, without being exceedingly shocked.

“You have a friendship for me then?” said he; “time, perhaps, and my unre-
 “mitted endeavours, may ripen it into
 “the tenderest of all passions: I will
 “now hope: have I not *some* encourage-
 “ment, my dearest Fanny?”

“No,

"No, indeed, Sir," replied I, with all the coldness I could possibly assume.

I saw his countenance change in a moment. Feeling my heart relent, I rose up, hastily broke from him, and ran up stairs. By so doing, I saved myself from saying what I might have afterwards remembered with repentance. I am very much afraid, however, that I shall not be able always to persevere in denying.

In the evening, I accompanied my Lady to Mrs. Serle's assembly. I staid above till it was time to go: I did not, indeed, come down till I was sent for; but my Lady went up again just when we were stepping into the coach.

Sir Charles was in the parlour.

"Shall you stay all the evening at Mrs. Serle's, Fanny?" said he, gravely.

"I don't know, Sir."

"You

“You *won't* know, because you are
“resolved to deny me every kind of
“satisfaction.”

I coloured; I trembled; I was hurt
at the indifference with which I was forced
to appear. My tears were ready to flow,
while I assured him that my Lady had
not said any thing to me about the even-
ing.

He looked earnestly at me, then drew
himself down again upon the sofa, and
took up a book.

We did not speak to each other till
my Lady returned. He then followed
us to the coach; when he had put his
mother in, he took my hand, pressed it,
and said, in a whisper, “You look me-
“lancholy.”

I could not suppress a sigh, tho' I
tried to appear easy.

“Will

“Will you go with us, Sir Charles?” said my Lady. “Mrs. Serle tells me “that you grow good for nothing; that “she never sees you.”

“Your Ladyship knows that I do not “love cards,” answered he.

We drove away immediately. The first person I beheld at Mrs. Serle’s was Sir Edward Deerhurst—He hastened to pay his compliments.

My Lady asked him, I thought, if Harriet and he had determined never to adjust their difference; for he replied, that as he had unfortunately opinions opposite to Miss Wyndham’s, he was afraid it was impossible for him to recommend himself to her in the manner he wished.

Her Ladyship answered, “’Tis no-
“thing but a love-quarrel, I dare say,
“and that may be easily made up. The
“falling

“falling out of lovers, you know, Sir Edward, is the renewing of love.”

Sir Edward did not appear desirous of carrying on the conversation upon that subject—My Lady soon sat down to a quadrille table: *he* took a chair by me, and entered into a very agreeable conversation upon a variety of topics: his remarks were extremely entertaining, and as they were not particularly interesting, I was pleased with them: they served to relieve my mind, after the anxiety which I had suffered during the day: they amused me, indeed, very much, and engaged my attention for a considerable time.

Lifting up my eyes, on a sudden, I saw Sir Charles, at a little distance, very closely observing me.

I believe I started; I am sure I coloured; tho' I cannot tell why I coloured,

as

as I was not conscious of having committed any fault. The true cause of my agitation was, I imagine, the pleasure which I felt at the unexpected sight of Sir Charles; a pleasure which I, possibly, felt the more strongly, as I dared not to own it.

When he found that I saw him, he advanced, and with a sort of forced smile, said softly to me, after having returned Sir Edward's compliment, "You have been, a long time, deeply engaged."

"Who, I?—no, not very long, I believe," replied I; "but I did not see *you* till this moment."

"I fancy you did not," answered he; "but I have been looking at *you*, this hour."

"An hour?" cried I: "surely, Sir Charles, I have not been sitting here half that time." "The

“The hours fly away very fast, Madam, when we are in company agreeable to us.”

This speech was intended, I thought, as a reproach, as he delivered it with a serious air, and with serious accents.

I was pained, my dear Madam, to think that I had given him any disquiet; and remained silent during the rest of the evening; tho’ Sir Edward continued to address himself to me; tho’ Sir Charles, who never left us, shared the conversation.

When I went to see if Lady Wyndham wanted me, Sir Charles was going, I believe, to take my hand to lead me to the coach, but perceiving Sir Edward advance, he drew back to leave *him* at liberty to take it—I could not help being loth to give it to any body but Sir Charles, and he might have easily read what

what passed in my mind in my looks. I once thought he had a great deal of penetration, especially when I was terrified lest he should have discovered my sentiments concerning him: I now begin to imagine that he has none at all, as he *will* fancy that I am in love with Sir Edward: I very much wish to remove his strange suspicions, but I cannot drive them out of his head, without making him acquainted with the true state of my heart. Teach me then, my dearest mother, how to conduct myself in so trying a situation, and believe me to be ever

Your most dutiful

And affectionate daughter,

F. HUME.

LETTER

LETTER LVII.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

MY mind has been disturbed so much these few days past, that I have been incapable of answering yours.

You flatter me by saying, that from what you have learnt from my letters, you think Fanny is by no means indifferent about me: but indeed, my friend, you only flatter me: I began to be of your way of thinking some time ago; several little incidents seemed to encourage my hope, and I was even sanguine enough to ask her if I might reckon upon her affection: but I could not obtain a satisfactory reply: soon afterwards I saw her so earnestly engaged in a *tête à tête* with Sir Edward Deerhurst, at Mrs. Serle's,

Serle's, that I was under a necessity of re-adopting my former opinions: I begin to be certain that *he* has ever been the man of her choice: and yet when I hinted my suspicions, she positively denied her partiality to him: she blushed at the same time so sweetly at the charge, and looked so truly concerned at having given me an opportunity to reproach her, that I relapsed into my doubting state—With regard to Fanny my eyes may have been deceived; but the discoveries which they have made concerning Harriet are safely to be relied on.—Harriet, in short, allows Captain Wilkinson such freedoms, that I cease to be surprised at Sir Edward Deerhurst's desertion. I intend to talk very seriously to Harriet, to let her know that I am not ignorant of her indiscreet conduct, and to tell her plainly that Wilkinson cannot be an

VOL. II. D eligible

eligible husband for her.—She acts with the greatest indiscretion and indelicacy, by giving him such improper encouragement. He has a design upon her fortune, I suppose, and thinks he shall secure that by making sure of her person. Perhaps she does not see through his schemes, her intention may be only to amuse herself with him; but I would advise no woman to venture to trust herself in such a situation, as it is the most dangerous one to be imagined. This discovery, added to my certainty with regard to Sir Edward's feelings in Miss Hume's favour, which must, I think, have a great effect on a heart already prepossessed in *his*, harraßs my mind to such a degree, that I cannot bring myself to think calmly about any thing. I am determined to consult Miss Hume about my sister: I will ask her if she
 knows

knows of any, if she suspects any connection between Wilkinson and Harriet. She will, doubtless, be my friend enough to disclose her sentiments upon a subject so essential to the support of my honour, and of my peace. Partial as I am to the society of women, and necessary as I believe them to be both to the forming our minds, to the enjoyment of every domestic virtue, and to the polishing our manners with every pleasing grace; yet I feel so much more pain than pleasure arising from my connections with them, that I wish I may not become quite soured by the disappointment I shall probably meet with in my pursuit after that felicity which, notwithstanding all their imperfections, is no where, but among the fair sex, to be found by your affectionate,

C. W.

D 2

LETTER

L E T T E R LVIII.

MISS FANNY HUME to Mrs. HUME.

A New perplexity, my dear Madam, has risen on *my* part, which more immediately calls for your advice than any I have yet met with.

Sir Charles, continuing jealous of Sir Edward, avoided me several days: by so doing, he gave me very great uneasiness: strengthened, however, by your admonitions, and approbation of my former conduct, I had the address to conceal it.

On Tuesday last, Sir Charles came into my dressing-room. Sitting down by me, he said, with a very grave face, "I am come, Miss Hume, to talk with you upon a very different subject from that which has so long employed my thoughts: I am come to ask your advice
"vice

“vice as a friend; and I hope you will
 “not refuse it, tho’ it was never my good
 “fortune,” added he, with a sigh, “to
 “make myself agreeable to you in a
 “more tender character.”

I assured him that I should always be
 happy, to shew him how sincerely I e-
 steemed him.

“I see now,” replied he, “that I
 “must never hope for any thing more
 “than cold esteem.”

I could not help sighing, myself, at
 the despairing manner in which he pro-
 nounced those words.

“I am afraid, Miss Hume,” added
 he, “that you are, like *me*, unhappy:
 “and I see, with the deepest regret,
 “that it is not in my power to remove
 “your unhappiness: but as you have
 “renewed your promise of friendship,
 “confirm it, I beseech you, by telling
 D 3 “me

“ me sincerely if you know any thing
“ about my sister’s connection with Cap-
“ tain Wilkinson.”

I was very much shocked at this question, my dear Madam; I unluckily knew a great deal more than I thought proper to own, and which I had determined, out of tenderness to Miss Wyndham’s character, as well as out of gratitude to the family, never to mention. I was staggered, I was at a loss for a reply. At last I imagined that an equivocal answer would be the most prudent one. Having heard you say that some questions could never be so properly answered as by others, I cried, “ What
“ connection, Sir Charles, can Miss
“ Wyndham possibly have with Cap-
“ tain Wilkinson?”

“ A very indiscreet one, I am afraid,”
replied he; “ I will acquaint you,
“ Fanny,

“ Fanny, with the observations which I
 “ have made upon my sister’s conduct,
 “ which I would conceal from every o-
 “ ther person: your good sense, and
 “ good nature will, I am satisfied, in-
 “ duce you to look, with pity, on the
 “ failings of another, and oblige you
 “ kindly to hide the faults of which
 “ your natural delicacy will not permit
 “ you to be guilty.”

“ Oh! Sir Charles!” said I: “ in-
 “ deed I do not deserve so many praises:
 “ I feel myself far inferior to the cha-
 “ racter you have drawn for me.”

“ In what respect do you deviate
 “ from it?” replied he: “ in nothing
 “ but in the insensibility and indiffe-
 “ rence to the man who doats on you.
 “ Your behaviour to me, I *must* con-
 “ demn, because I am cruelly pained
 “ by it.”

56 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

“ I do not think, Sir Charles,” said I, glad to turn the conversation, “ that if I was less cruel, I should give satisfaction : by being kind to every man, who said a civil thing to me, I should be quite a contemptible creature, and not only unworthy the attention of any one person, but justly despised by all.”

“ Despised by all you never *will* be— because you never will be kind but to one man : whoever that man is, he will be blest beyond expression, by the preference with which you honour him. Your confidence, upon this occasion, I dare not, I am very sensible, expect ; but there can be no impropriety in your informing me what you have observed between Harriet and Wilkinson.”

“ I have

“ I have observed no more than o-
 “ ther people,” said I, vexed at his
 persisting to believe me secretly attach-
 ed to somebody. “ Miss Wyndham has
 “ been intimate with Mr. Wilkinson
 “ and his family ever since they were
 “ children: between such people there
 “ are always familiarities exchanged,
 “ which would be thought very parti-
 “ cular between those who were not so
 “ intimately connected, and appear
 “ more exceptionable than they really
 “ are.”

He did not seem to be thoroughly
 pleased with my answer: finding, how-
 ever, that he could not make me enter
 more fully into the subject, he was
 obliged to give it up, for that time at
 least, to my great satisfaction. It would
 be highly improper for *me* to discover
 what I have observed: but the truth

58 THE WAY TO LOSE HIM.

is, Miss Wyndham, undoubtedly suffers Wilkinſon to take unwarrantable liberties with her, and rather gives him reaſon to believe that they are agreeable, than endeavours, by any means, to diſcourage him: though I am really of opinion that ſhe would prefer Sir Edward Deerhurſt, ſetting aſide his rank and fortune, to any other man, was there a greater ſimilarity in their diſpoſitions; but their diſpoſitions are ſo widely different, that I am afraid they would not be happy, were they married. They are, at preſent ſeparated; yet they have ſeparated before, and have been reconciled. If Captain Wilkinſon can prevail upon her to marry him, he will gain, I ſuppoſe, a point of great conſequence, in *his* eſtimation: as Miſs Wyndham has a much larger fortune than he has reaſon to expect with a wife.

wife. Their tastes, indeed, are pretty much the same; but as they are both very expensive, two thousand pounds will hardly be sufficient to pay for their pleasures. Captain Wilkinson is very apt to be familiar with every woman who comes in his way: to Miss Wyndham he has lately been particularly free, both in company, and at times when they have thought that nobody observed them.—Surely, my dear mother, it would ill become me, who am under so many obligations to my lady, to sit in judgment upon any of her family, especially on her only daughter. A woman should, I think, be extremely tender of a woman's reputation; and yet I am glad Sir Charles suspects a too great intimacy between his sister and the captain: he may, perhaps, put a stop to it before it goes too far:

by *taking notice* of it, he may *do that*: She who allows a man improper freedoms, not only injures her character, but acquires a looseness of behaviour sufficient to render her suspected of being guilty of criminal proceedings, tho' she may really have no design to lose sight of virtue. The best intentions in the world, however, are too often frustrated by opportunity and importunity: and Captain Wilkinson will certainly avail himself of them both, or I am much mistaken in him. Miss Wyndham, therefore, is in a very dangerous situation, and I am afraid nothing can save her but Sir Edward's return. This is what I want to communicate to Sir Charles, but I know not how to acquaint him with it. Sir Edward's return would also be of advantage to *me*: by renewing his attachment

ment to Miss Wyndham, he would convince Sir Charles, that I am no object of his attention. Yet I cannot tell how to complain of Miss Wyndham to her brother: He is nicely jealous of the honour of his family; and I would neither have him quarrel with his sister, nor with the Captain, in consequence of any thing I say to him. Inform me, my dearest madam, how you wish me to act, and believe me to be,

Your ever dutiful and affectionate
daughter,

F. H.

P. S. Mrs. Crofts is returned to England: She was here last night, but goes, in a few days to Wiltshire to be ready to receive Mr. Crofts's sister, who is to be married on Thursday next to Sir Walter Comber. This affair brought them sooner to England than they

they had intended, and much against the inclination of Mrs. Crofts, who declares that Paris is the only place where you can enjoy life. In England, she says, you barely endure it.



L E T T E R L I X.

Mrs. CROFTS to Miss WYNDHAM.

Lonesome Lodge, Wilts.

WHILE I am waiting in this stupid retreat for the arrival of Mrs. Crofts's guests, I cannot, I think, employ my time better than by telling you, Harriet, that if you pursue the plan you have at present adopted, you are undone to all intents and purposes. —Would any woman in her senses, who might have been Lady Deerhurst, who might have had a title, fortune, jewels, equipage, and a handsome fellow into

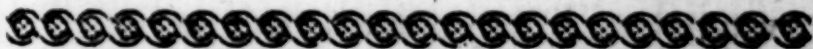
into the bargain, be contented to be plain Mrs. Wilkinson, and take up with an Irish Ensign, most probably upon half-pay too, as you yourself suspect? Why, child, you must, certainly, be distracted. The man can marry you for nothing but your fortune; and *that*, tho' it may do when joined to Sir Edward's estate, you will find scarce sufficient to afford you a subsistence with only the addition of the Captain's scanty pay. I really confess, I am extremely astonished at your suffering such a fellow to be familiar: but, perhaps, you have never entertained a thought of marrying him. I remember you once hinted, that such a scheme would not be eligible; why then do you permit him to take such liberties? liberties, which if noticed must ruin you for ever in Sir Edward's

ward's eyes. You own that your imprudent behaviour has already driven him from you, after you had been reconciled. If you go on in the same style, you may be sure that he never will be recalled. I allow, that Wilkin-son is a handsome young fellow, and well enough to trifle with a little; but when you come to think of matrimony, there is no comparison to be made between him and Deerhurst: one will be as easily fooled as the other; and I, positively, think that men of the best understanding, men with the most elegant accomplishments, and with the most polished manners, are the most easily managed; as their thoughts never want employment, and as they are employed about matters quite different from those which engage the attention of their wives and their mistresses: a
down-

downright man of pleasure, a mere *Macaroni*, has so much of the devil in his own composition, that he naturally suspects his wife to be of the same infernal turn. Besides, fools and coxcombs, Harriet, are a thousand times more obstinate than men of sense: make sure therefore of Deerhurst: and if you *must* make yourself ridiculous, afterwards, with somebody, take your pretty Captain for your *Cecisbeo*. This is the sincere advice of,

Your affectionate friend,

C. CROFTS.



LETTER LX.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

WHAT fresh reason have I to
esteem, to admire, to love Fan-
ny Hume! With what prudence and de-
licacy

licacy has she acted with regard to a very critical affair: and yet with what a noble frankness, and even tenderness to *me*! The tender part of her carriage, indeed, was not, I believe, intended, but it has revived those hopes in me which were almost extinguished by despair.

I questioned her closely, the other day, about my sister and Wilkinson, thinking it better to learn every thing relating to their intimacy, to which I imagined she could be no stranger, as she was, unavoidably, often in their way.

Her answers upon the subject were all evasive. I resolved, therefore, from what I had myself observed, to talk very gravely, and roundly also to Harriet on the folly and indelicacy of giving a man so much encouragement of whom
she

she would be mad to think in a serious light, as neither his circumstances, nor situation in life, could be worthy of her attention.

She fired at my reproofs, and began to retort Fanny Hume upon me: but I silenced her in a moment, by drawing a just character of Fanny, whom I strongly recommended to her as a pattern for discretion, adding, at the same time, that I would not have her look upon my encomiums as the wild effusions of an enamoured brain, as every man who knew her, was ready to subscribe to her merits. — “The serious
 “addresses of Lord H—— to her,”
 continued I, “are sufficient proofs of
 “her intrinsic value: nice in his choice
 “of women, and cautious about mak-
 “ing a perpetual engagement, his Lord-
 “ship must have been perfectly sensible
 “ of

“ of Miss Hume’s personal and intellectual charms, or he never would have made such flattering overtures to her.”

By degrees, I prevailed on Harriet, at last, to hear reason; and then proceeded to endeavour to make her ashamed of her conduct. For the imprudence of her conduct, she apologized by pleading the neglect of Sir Edward Deerhurst; adding, that when she found Sir Edward a little jealous of Wilkinson, she had, apparently, encouraged *him*, in hopes of bringing him back to her.

I told her, that she had proceeded in a very silly, and unfair manner. “ All kinds of deceit,” continued I, “ are unwarrantable, and frequently productive of the worst consequences. In short, I at length convinced
“ her

“ her of the extreme impropriety of
 “ her behaviour ; and, in return to her
 “ assurances of amendment, I promised
 “ to try what I could do with Sir Ed-
 “ ward, towards a reconciliation, pro-
 “ vided she would behave in such a
 “ manner as to give him no reason to
 “ repent of it.”

She agreed to be directed by me. I have undertaken to bring about this event, but I question whether all my address will be sufficient to ensure me success.

On Harriet's leaving me, I was going to think seriously what methods I should take to facilitate the execution of my design. Miss Hume, at that moment, entered the parlour, with the most enchanting smile, a smile of complacency, with which a kind of tender anxiety was blended,
 which

which rendered her uncommonly attractive. She said, "Are you at leisure, Sir Charles?"

"I am always at leisure to listen to my amiable Fanny;" replied I.

She then sat down by me, and told me that my close interrogations concerning my sister had given her great disquiet, as she could not bear to expose her to my reproofs, by finding fault with some parts of her behaviour which she had, for some time, wished she would alter: adding, that in consequence of her doubts about the propriety of concealing what she had observed, she had written to her mother for advice, who charged her to let no interested motives urge her to hide any thing she knew of my family from me, as I not only had a right to be informed of it, but as I might

might be able, by an early intelligence, to prevent any bad consequences arising from a continued indiscreet conduct. What excellent lessons has this dear girl ever received from her mother! how diligently has she practised them!—I caught her hand, and thanked her for her admirable prudence, joined to a disposition uncommonly amiable.—She stopped me by a supplicating look full of real tenderness, and earnestly intreated me not only to behave with gentleness to my sister, but to take the greatest care of my own safety. “A quarrel with this Wilkinson,” added she, “may be fatal to you.—Let me conjure you not to speak warmly to a man whose profession obliges him to resent the slightest disapprobation of his conduct. Do not, my dear Sir Charles, venture

“to

“ to expose a life so valuable to your
“ friends.”

Here she ceased to articulate, but with her speaking eyes, rendered still more eloquent by the tears which stood trembling in them, pleaded more powerfully for my safety than if she had made use of a thousand words. I gazed on her with the highest delight, and asked her if I was really her dear Sir Charles.

With a blushing, downcast look, she replied—“ You must be dear, Sir, to
“ every body who is acquainted with
“ your worth : and to *me* in particular,
“ whom you have so greatly distin-
“ guished—Think, therefore, what dif-
“ traction I must endure, to feel myself
“ the cause of a quarrel even with your
“ sister, and more especially with a man
“ who will, most probably, imagine that
“ he is obliged, agreeable to the fashion-
“ able

“able ideas of honour, to revenge
“it.”

The agitation with which these words were delivered, made a still stronger impression upon me: I assured her, to lessen her uneasiness, that I had not the slightest intention to give myself any trouble about Wilkinson, as he had not insulted my sister unprovoked. “I am
“very certain,” added I, “that *she* began *first*, by encouraging freedoms to
“which no man of gallantry or spirit
“could be inattentive. Be composed,
“then, my dearest Fanny; I shall only
“talk to Harriet, and insist upon her
“dismissing Wilkinson entirely; when
“I have gained that point, I will endeavour to reconcile Sir Edward De-
“hurst to her.”

Miss Hume then assured me that my sister had allowed Wilkinson rather too

many liberties; adding, at the same time, that she firmly believed Harriet only designed to amuse herself after Sir Edward's second desertion.—“ But as
“ such intimacies,” continued she, “ are,
“ sometimes, inadvertently, carried too
“ far, if some friend would just kindly
“ hint to her the impropriety of her
“ conduct, she may, I think, by re-
“ flecting upon the consequences, na-
“ turally to be expected from it, resolve
“ to behave in a more prudent manner.”

I thanked Fanny again and again for the part she had taken in this affair, which has, I believe, given her the most poignant disquiet, merely upon *my* account: is it, therefore, possible for her to be totally indifferent about me? Certainly not: yet she will not hear of love from *me*, or any other man. I have, however, gained something by this foolish

ish behaviour of Harriet's: I have discovered that Fanny has a very tender esteem for me; and that esteem may, under proper management, make her every thing I wish.

From Fanny I went to Harriet, and again talked roundly to her concerning her indiscretion.

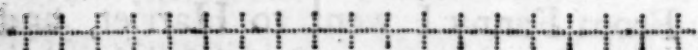
She affected to be extremely surprised, and offended; but the change in her countenance sufficiently proved her guilt. She thought proper at last to appear willing to make some concessions if Sir Edward could be brought to hear reason, as she called it; but I am pretty sure the want of reason has been hitherto on *her* side.

My next business will be to find a proper opportunity to attack Deerhurst; possibly my charming Fanny may assist me in this affair also: by proposing it

to her, I shall, at least, try whether she is really more attached to Sir Edward, than to

Your sincere friend

C. W.



LETTER LXI.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

I Thank you for your advice, Charlotte, and am going to follow it as fast as I can: but though I allow it to be good, you must not suppose, if I *do* improve by it, that my reformation is entirely owing to your excessive discretion; for Sir Charles, having been prying into my conduct, lectured me in such a manner concerning my little Captain, that I was almost angry with him: however, he artfully threw in a hint about bringing back Deerhurst, and by *that* made me listen to him with
more

more patience: yet how, and in which way this matter is to be managed I am sure he cannot inform me. When I appeared to fall in with his design, he expressed a thousand apprehensions, lest I should have provoked him so much as to make it difficult to convince him that I was sensible of my indiscreet behaviour. I could not help smiling at his unnecessary fears; I think I have a sure method, if Deerhurst ever loved me, but I did not chuse to inform Sir Charles of it. I know better than to trust an officious brother with my intentions. However, I shall proceed to action immediately: if I succeed, Crofts, you shall be thanked again; that is, if you do not presume to say another word against Wilkinson, who is, indisputably, at present, every thing, in the eyes of

Your sincere friend, H. W.

LETTER LXII.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

MY design has so far succeeded, that Miss Hume has promised to do every thing in her power to prevail upon Sir Edward to come back to his old mistress: she undertook this friendly business with so much good nature, and readiness to oblige me, and went about it with so much alacrity, that I think I may be quite sure that she is free from the slightest inclination for him herself. This discovery, I confess, has thrown a load off my mind, and I feel myself another creature. With what a charming vivacity did she tell me, that she, for the first time in her life, must run after a man!—"It is an awkward business," added she, "but I shall, I dare say, succeed

“succeed better, as it is the cause of my friend, than if it is was my own.”— She then told me she has heard that Sir Edward, who is a great lover of air and exercise, walked almost every morning in Hyde-Park before breakfast. “I must go thither, Sir Charles,” continued she.

“And what will you say to him,” replied I, “when you have met him?”

“I will tell him,” said she, “that Miss Wyndham is dying for him. I will tell him any thing to move his compassion. When a favourite point is to be carried, Sir Charles, we may be allowed to stretch a little, tho’ I abhor all kinds of deceit: and luckily for me, I shall not be guilty of any upon this occasion, for Mrs. Fletcher informs me that Miss Wyndham is really very much indisposed: fretted, I suppose, at the dismissal of one
E 4 “lover,

“lover, before she has made sure of
“another.”

No matter; she had better be sick than sorry, or have occasion to be so at any time. I heartily wish this may produce the desired effect, if she is really sincere in her determination to dismiss Wilkinson: it would be highly blameable to attempt to impose a worthless woman for a wife upon such a man as Deerhurst, who has an excellent heart, and is susceptible of the finest feelings of humanity.—I could not undertake a business of this kind, even in favour of my sister: but as woman is a capricious creature, I am willing to hope that Harriet's indiscretions have proceeded more from a giddiness of disposition, than from any ill designs: and as she has now been warned of her danger by suffering improper freedoms from men, she may, perhaps,

perhaps, see where she was wrong, and behave discreetly for the future.

You enquire what is become of Clara and Bell, Wilkinson's sisters. I cannot exactly tell you; they do not come here quite so often as they did. Possibly they have better game in view than

Your sincere

C. W.



L E T T E R LXIII.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir GEORGE
BARTON.

I Have been strangely attacked, and warmly solicited to renew my addresses to Harriet; and by whom, do you imagine? by one who with every charm to win and keep my heart, herself, has earnestly intreated me to give it to another. Miss Hume, the ever-

E 5

amiable

amiable Miss Hume is become the warmest advocate for Miss Wyndham. I met her, as if by accident in Hyde-Park, accompanied only by her maid, tho', I believe, it was a concerted scheme, to bring me back to Harriet.

She told me that Miss Wyndham was actually very much indisposed, in consequence of the vexation she had endured on *my* account.

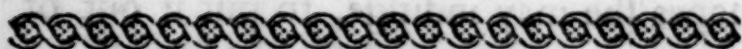
Was it not her own fault? That girl seems to spend her whole life in committing errors, and in being sorry for the commission of them: she is perpetually finning and repenting—I honestly confess to you, that I cannot have a high opinion of such a character.—However, I could not resist the fair advocate, who would not leave me till she had made me promise to visit Harriet again. If I find her, as she is represented to me,

me, sensible of her foibles, sorry for them, and resolved to conquer them intirely, I will do every thing I can to restore her mind to the tranquility it enjoyed before her imprudent carriage drove me from her; but if, on the contrary, she appears to be still the light, uncertain, capricious girl I have hitherto found her, I will, positively, quit her, at once, never to return: and to destroy any future hopes she may indulge, to put it out of my power to be trifled with by her a third time, I will look out for a Lady of a disposition more suitable to my own, and marry her directly.—Miss Hume's pleadings in favour of Harriet were very eloquent and forcible; but I fear she will not be able to perform what she has promised for her: there was no resisting either her voice or her eyes. Her motives for undertaking such a business

were so generous and disinterested, that I could not possibly disappoint her: I go, therefore, to see Miss Wyndham. Should she really be out of order, by having properly reflected upon the indiscreetness of her behaviour, I cannot fly to her too soon.—Adieu: and believe me to be

Ever yours,

E. D.



LETTER LXIV.

MISS WYNDHAM TO MRS. CROFTS.

HOW I long to see you in town, that we may laugh over the return of Deerhurst, brought about without the least trouble on *my* side; by the sole contrivance of Fanny Hume: I am only sorry, I confess, that I must be indebted to *her* for this change in my affairs, as she may gain a triumph over me:

me: her consequence will certainly be increased in Sir Charles's eyes to a very great degree: however, the merit is not all hers neither, for I had feigned myself sick on purpose to see what effect my illness would have on Deerhurst; yet I must not discover my stratagem at present; I have nothing to do but to appear in a languid state for a little while, and then seem to be perfectly recovered by *his* assiduities about me. I shall certainly be weary of the *farce* before it is over, and perhaps of *him* into the bargain, tho' to do him justice, he behaved to me with great tenderness and solicitude. I don't know how it is, but there is something in the unrestrained, easy freedom of Wilkinson, which suits my present humour better: Sir Edward is so delicate, so refined in his manner, so—— I cannot tell what——but as I said before,

fore, he is Sir Edward still: if I have any management, I may, while I go on with *him*, continue to play the fool with my little Captain.—You may imagine then that I have but just time enough to subscribe myself

Yours sincerely,

H. W.

P. S. I dare say that Fanny has not interfered between Deerhurst and me with her own inclination: Sir Charles is as violent an advocate for Sir Edward as you are, tho' influenced by very different motives: Fanny interfered, therefore, merely because she would not by a refusal run a risque of disobliging my brother.

LETTER

LETTER LXV.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

WITH joy I take up my pen to tell you that my most sanguine expectations with regard to Deerhurst and my sister, are more than answered—Fanny, charming girl, brought him back: he could not resist the persuasive eloquence of her eyes and tongue: yet I cannot help thinking that he had much rather pay his court to *her*, than to Harriet.—Who, indeed, would hesitate a moment between them? Fanny, tho' she always behaves to Sir Edward with unaffected good humour and politeness, seems to avoid him: she avoids us both, indeed, as much as possible; however, when we *do* meet, she makes some amends for her absence by the charms of her
conver-

conversation, and the sweetness of her temper. I sometimes fancy that she actually loves me: and yet, whenever I attempt to avail myself of her apparent partiality for me, she constantly leaves me abruptly; flies from me with the greatest velocity, breaks from me when I am in the middle of a very interesting sentence, and often looks as if she was afraid to trust herself with me. —I am as often half ready to quarrel with her, tho' I, at the same time, am pleased, because I flatter myself that her mode of behaviour is the strongest proof of her attachment to me.

Yours, &c. C. W.



L E T T E R LXVI.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir GEORGE
BARTON.

I Kept my promise with Miss Hume.
I dressed myself in order to visit
Miss

Miss Wyndham, but sent, previously to enquire after her health, and to know if my company would be agreeable: an earnest invitation was immediately returned.

On my arrival, I found my languishing Lady prepared to receive me, dressed with all the elegance of a studied dishabille which, I am very ready to own, became her extremely: I never saw her look half so well: there were not the smallest traces of her indisposition in her countenance: she appeared, on the contrary, to be in full health; she had more colour, and was more plump, than ever: yet there was a kind of languor diffused over her whole figure.

She received me with pleasure, and made a few incoherent apologies for what had passed: those apologies were accompanied with a few reproaches for neglecting her: my desertion, she added,
had

had given her a great deal of anxiety, but while she whimpered out that declaration, her expressions I thought were stronger than her feelings; yet I am willing to allow that her satisfaction at the sight of me on my return had banished her sorrow, and left no room for any thing but joy. She has, certainly, a very lovely person, and she seems to have a large share of tenderness in her disposition; but then she wants the discretion and ever-entertaining talents for conversation of which Miss Hume is happily possessed: there is also an uncommon delicacy in the latter, peculiar to herself, which renders her perfectly enchanting: had I been acquainted with *her* first, I certainly never should have thought of Harriet; yet, if Harriet had never deviated from the behaviour which first attracted me, I should not wish that

I had

I had not made choice of Fanny, who must either be secretly attached to somebody, or have a constitution uncommonly cold: she gives, however, striking marks of sensibility in her conversation and manners; and she discovers, at all times, a propensity to oblige, to yield to, every creature about her. Sir Charles seems to adore her, but they do not behave to each other as if they were tenderly connected; there evidently appears, there certainly is a very great friendship between them; such friendships, indeed, generally rise into the tenderest attachments. — To such an attachment Sir Charles is, beyond a doubt, strongly inclined: Miss Hume, in public at least, endeavours to conduct herself in a manner to prevent an affectionate intimacy on *her* side, from being suspected: so that were I *not* engaged to Miss Wyndham,

ham, I could have no hopes of gaining Miss Hume's heart.—I am not indeed vain enough to expect a favourable reception from her as a lover, as Lord H—— and Sir Charles have been refused; if Harriet, however, can be satisfied with the affection of him who is willing to allow her the admiration of the whole world, I shall, I am persuaded, be contented with my choice.

Yours sincerely,

E. D.



LETTER LXVII.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

WHAT a tiresome state is a state of suspense! especially when a subject on which the happiness of our lives depends, engages all our attention!

tion! In such a state am *I* at present: I am anxious beyond expression with regard to Fanny: sometimes raised by hope, but more frequently depressed by fear. Yesterday, however, I could not help fancying that she looked on me with the eyes of affection, tho' I almost as soon believed that I had reason to change my opinion. I am perpetually dropping in at Lady Wyndham's, tho' I do not very often dine—Yesterday some particular friends out of the country were to spend the day with my mother, she, therefore, desired me to meet them. At an early hour I complied with her request. The servant who brought the jellies, chocolate, &c. about, broke one of the glasses just when I had set down my cup, and it cut my hand: it bled pretty fast: I rose, and went into the next room to prevent any bustle;

buffle ; not chusing indeed to have the little accident taken notice of at all.

Scarce had I entered the dressing room before Fanny flew after me, with a face as pale as death, and with a faltering voice, she cried — “ Where are you hurt, Sir Charles ? do, pray take something, and let me send for a surgeon.”

“ My dear girl,” replied I, transported with her attention to me ; “ it is nothing but a scratch ; it will soon be well with a little Arquebusade water.”

“ No,” cried she, trembling, while tears stood ready to fall from her eyes ; “ you bleed very fast ; I must send for help.”

Away she ran immediately to the Bell ; she then hurried back to me again, took out her handkerchief, and wrapped it round my hand, calling, at the

the same time, for the Arquebusade water.

I did not, at first, make so light of my accident as I should otherwise have done, because I had a mind to see how far her concern would carry her; but when I found she was so much frightened as actually to be ready to faint away, I assured her that I was quite free from pain, and that my hand would be soon well.

She did not, however, come to herself: she grew almost insensible, and frightened *me* almost as much as I had frightened *her*. I called on her, and desired her to assist me in binding up my wound, but she sat incapable of speaking; she only made a sign to Fletcher, who had brought the bandage, to tie it on: as soon as she had tied it, she left the room. I then sat down by Fanny,

ny, and taking her in my arms, intreated her to be composed, and assured her that I felt not the least uneasiness from my hand. I assured her, also, that I would have suffered the worst of misfortunes to have enjoyed the transporting pleasure of beholding her so extremely anxious on *my* account.—“ But
 “ yet, my dearest creature,” continued, I, straining her to my bosom, “ if the
 “ pain which I have occasioned
 “ has too much disordered you, I cannot receive any consolation from it;
 “ speak to me, Fanny: tell me you are
 “ better, that I may indulge the exquisite delight I feel in seeing you so affected about me.”

“ Oh! Sir Charles,” replied she, recovering, and striving to disengage herself, “ let me go, I beseech you: I
 “ am exceedingly sorry I have been so
 “ weak,

“weak, but indeed I could not help it :
“I was afraid that you was very much
“hurt, and I am terrified at the sight
“of any body in danger : — I hope
“you are better now, Sir,” added she,
drawing still farther from me, and putting
on the most reserved, the most forbidden
air she could, possibly, assume.

“I *was* better, Madam,” said I, gravely, “I was well, I was in an ecstasy of joy, to see you so alarmed at my
“supposed danger, but since you are
“changed, and are become indifferent
“about me, all my happiness is at an
“end ; my disquietudes, my distressing
“sensations are returned, and I
“care not what befalls me.”

She had no leisure to reply, if she had been ever so willing ; for my mother (who heard me say I had cut my hand, tho’ she did not imagine it was so

bad as it really was) came into the room to ask me how I did, and to see if I was properly attended.

I told her what had been done; adding that Miss Hume had followed me to give directions to Mrs. Fletcher, who had bound up my hand, and that I should return to the company immediately.

As soon as my mother was gone, I turned my head in order to speak again to Fanny, and to endeavour to make her confess she really loved me; but she had slipped out of the room, while I was talking to my mother. She gave me no opportunity to say a single word to her the rest of the day: I staid to sup, I even staid till my mother retired, hoping that I should then see Fanny, alone: but she followed her Ladyship so close that I could not stop her, wishing

wishing me a good night with the most provoking composure, and treating me (as she has done ever since she discovered such concern for me) with a coolness almost insupportable; yet I was forced to bear it.

I returned again in the morning to breakfast, but found her just in the same humour. I thought, however, that she appeared uneasy, she looked very anxious at me several times, when she imagined I did not observe her; I was more cautious, therefore, of my own behaviour, that I might catch her, if possible, off her guard, but all my caution was to no purpose; I even pretended my hand was not so well as it was the day before.—She made no reply; yet I fancied that she suppressed a sigh. When my mother advised me to let a surgeon look at my hand, a gleam of

satisfaction seemed to diffuse itself over her face.—I had intended to have complained heavily of the uneasiness I felt, when I found myself in private with her; but a swift succession of morning visitors totally disappointed me. On her going up stairs and leaving my mother with a couple of her male flirts, I went home, as much discontented as ever.

Yours, &c.

C. W.



LETTER LXVIII.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

YOU tell me that you are glad to see me restored to my senses, and in a way to make a fool of one of the finest fellows in England, but I shall never succeed: he is too serious, too sober—

sober — too wise, I suppose he thinks himself — to trifle, or be trifled with. In short, he is so entirely different from Wilkinson, that I cannot like him half so well as I did before I knew his rival: yet if I lose him he will certainly address Fanny Hume immediately, and she will as certainly accept of him. My brother and she are more distant in their behaviour to each other than ever: she is, I can perceive, grown quite sullen, and discontented since Deerhurst and I have been reconciled: she only appears tolerably chearful when *he* is present; she then assumes the most insinuating carriage, and is so soft, so supple, on purpose to let him see that he may do what he will with her — She will certainly get him; she is the very sort of woman suitable to him. I am more and more convinced that I never

F 3

shall

shall be. He is so regular, so solemn, so silent, so quiet, so like a husband, I declare, as if he had been married these ten years.—How *unlike* my dear George, who is all life, love, and vivacity! — Well! I never could have thought of marrying Deerhurst without having secured a pretty fellow to play the fool with now and then, and to keep up my spirits; I should absolutely sink into a lethargy with such a dull insensible, drowsy creature as Sir Edward. —But I must prim it a little longer till I have made sure of him, for were he to imagine that I entertain these sentiments, he would leave me, and go to Fanny. That is a triumph *she* shall not enjoy, if it can be possibly prevented by

Your very affectionate friend,

H. W.

LETTER

L E T T E R LXIX.

Miss FANNY HUME to Mrs. HUME.

I Have been in the greatest danger, my dear Madam, of discovering what I have so long endeavoured to keep confined to my own bosom, concealed from every body's observation.— I am afraid, that Sir Charles knows I love him. An accident which he met with yesterday threw me into such a tremor, and alarmed me so much, that I was quite off my guard. A servant holding a waiter, covered with refreshments of various kinds, to him, awkwardly broke one of the glasses, which cut his hand. I was so frightened, that I forgot every thing: my terrified looks, and my faltering voice too plainly declared my affectionate concern. Sir Charles, by appearing transported at

F 4

the

the discovery, first shewed me my error. I hastily strove to repair it, and, probably, by an over-eagerness to undo what I had done, acted still more indiscreetly. I persevered, however, in keeping up my affected indifference, tho' it cost me very dear, as I really shuddered, lest the accident which had alarmed me should be attended with any fatal consequences. He assured me, indeed, that he felt no uneasiness from his wound, after his hand was tied up; but he looks so grave, so unhappy to day, that I am afraid it is far from being well. I would give the world to know whether his hand is better or worse, yet I must not enquire about it; my enquiry would but confirm his opinion, too justly entertained, concerning my affection for him. It is not to be told what I suffer: I do not believe
that

that I shall be able to conceal my fears, much longer.

Lady Wyndham made me more easy, this morning, than I have been since this accident happened, by pressing him to let a surgeon look at it. I proposed a surgeon at first, but I dared not repeat my wishes, lest I should, by so doing, strengthen his suspicions.

He asked me to hold his tea cup at breakfast, telling me, that it was too heavy for his hand.

I could not refuse his request; but *my* hand trembled to such a degree, that I thought both the cup and saucer would have dropped to the ground. He watched me so closely, and looked at me so attentively, that I fancy I shall soon be obliged to acquaint him with the true situation of my heart. I would fly to *you*, my dear mother, directly,

but I know you cannot conceal me from him, and his following me to Luton would, at this time especially, have too particular an appearance. He would be perpetually with me *there*; we only meet *here* occasionally, and oftener in company, than in private.— These reasons, added to my strong desires to do every thing to oblige Lady Wyndham, who chuses to have me always about her, have hitherto prevented me from returning to Luton: be assured, however, my dearest Madam, that if you think I shall be better, or safer with *you*, I will come directly. How careful ought we to be about rallying people for foibles, into which we may readily fall ourselves! and how properly may Louisa retort the laugh upon me for what I said to her concerning her handsome partner! When I was so much
diverted

diverted at her uneasiness, I little thought I should be just in the same situation. However, I must be allowed to say, that I have far more reason to fall in love with Sir Charles, whom I see continually, from whom I have received so many favours, and who has so often declared that he loves me sincerely, than Louisa had to fall in love with *her* favourite, whom she never saw but once. He was certainly very much struck with her, and admired her prodigiously, yet he made no positive declaration: it would have been odd indeed if he *had* in so short a time; knowing very little about her, and having scarce any opportunity to recommend himself to her. But you see there was no occasion for a longer acquaintance: my sister found him so amiable at first sight, that she still retains faithfully his image in her

bosom, and will not admit another to supplant it. What strange, unaccountable girls have you got, my dear Madam; so unfashionably constant in spite of all difficulties we meet with! I try to laugh at my own proceedings, but it will not do. — Can you not say something still more forcible to strengthen me against the power of a too pleasing passion? I shall be extremely obliged to you for any additional advice and assistance: Is it not odd, however, that I should wish to steel my heart against a man who is so deserving of my most affectionate esteem? Is it not strange that the very affection and esteem which I feel for him should make me so selfish as to wish that he may be happy with no other woman? These sentiments are so mean that I am ashamed

of
of

of them: but I shall never be ashamed
to subscribe myself

Your truly affectionate
and dutiful daughter

F. H.

P. S. I have been inexpressibly happy
in prevailing upon Sir Edward Deer-
hurst, at Sir Charles's desire, to re-
turn once more to Miss Wyndham.



L E T T E R LXX.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir GEORGE
BARTON.

I Am sorry to tell you, my friend, that
tho' I constantly visit Harriet, and
tho' I am better received by her than
ever, I find something in her every time
I see her which does not quite please me.
She has lost, or I fancy she has lost, all
that blushing innocence of aspect, all
that

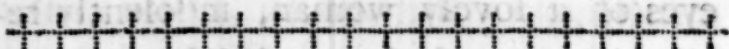
that engaging timidity which threw an additional charm over her whole person, and rendered her superlatively attractive. Her face no longer glows when I seize a kiss by surprise: she neither starts from my arms when I catch her to my bosom, nor trembles when I detain her in them from pleasure, or from fear. The bashfulness which, on our first acquaintance, was so bewitching, is no more observable in her face: she neither changes colour, nor moves a single feature. Instead of being afraid of me, she rather seems to wish that I would take liberties: Possibly, she is of opinion of the girl, mentioned in one of Mr. *Fitzadam's* entertaining papers, who wanted to see how far a man's impudence would carry him: a girl of this turn, let me tell you Barton, is not very desirable for a *wife*. Harriet, indeed, is perfectly safe with
me,

me, but will she be so with every man who, tempted by her personal beauties, and her inviting behaviour, may venture to say and do what he pleases? There is nothing to be sure more alluring than that languor which some of our fine ladies either really feel, or affect to feel: the languishing attitudes, and half-shut eyes of a lovely woman, indolently reclined upon a sofa, and displaying her whole figure in the most captivating manner, cannot, however, make a man of any delicacy, behold her in the most favourable light. A man, indeed, as voluptuous as herself may find pleasure in her arms merely as a mistress, but he must be quite infatuated who has the least thought of marrying her. I wish I may not have drawn too just a picture of Harriet: how she came so changed I cannot imagine. She was a very different

ferent character when I first knew her. If I see no alteration for the better, I must e'en adopt a new plan; if she continues in the way she is at present, she will, by no means, be a suitable companion for life to

Your affectionate

E. D.



LETTER LXXI.

MISS WYNDHAM to MRS. CROFTS.

SIR Edward has followed me so much, and watched me with such vigilance, these two or three days past, that I have not been able to speak to Wilkinson in private uninterrupted: I dare not, you know, encourage him in publick, lest this teasing Deerhurst, my curious brother, or the discreet Fanny Hume, or some other impertinent creature

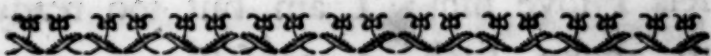
ture should take notice of us : I have a thousand things to say, a thousand things to hear ; I wish, therefore, that you would lend us your dressing-room the first afternoon you have a party at home. I would not chuse to be at your house when you are abroad, because I may be suspected ; but if I dine with you, I can pretend to be not very well. When I am left in your apartment, while you are receiving your company below, if Wilkinson should drop in, you may send him up to me. I cannot think of a better scheme at present, nor should I have communicated *this*, had I met you at home when I called : burn it as soon as you have read it, and send a card to invite me to dinner the first day that suits you : I will take care to let Wilkinson know, and contrive to keep Deerhurst out of the way, if possible :

fible : but that will not be an easy matter, for, presuming upon his being so near having some authority over me, he plays the part of an usurper before his time ; in the mean while the impassioned George complains tenderly of his fate, and swears that the day which gives my hand to Deerhurst must render him miserable beyond expression : I am determined, therefore, to administer all the consolation to him in my power : it must, however, be administered by stealth. I have many spies upon my conduct, and can only stay now to subscribe myself

Your ever-affectionate

H. W.

L E T-



LETTER LXXII.

MISS FANNY HUME to MISS HUME.

I Am so extremely perplexed with regard to my behaviour to Sir Charles, that I believe I must return to Luton: I must afterwards contrive some excuse to make a visit to my aunt, with which Lady Wyndham, when I am at a distance, may be better satisfied, than if I was with her. If I remain here much longer, Sir Charles must know how extremely dear he is to me: I begin to feel it impossible to hide my very great affection for him from his penetrating eyes. It is my excessive anxiety about his hand which has undone me: tho' I sometimes believe that he keeps it bound up on purpose to alarm and terrify me; on purpose to make me confess

fess I love him: I am but too ready to make such a confession; prudence, however, ties up my tongue, yet my eyes are perpetually betraying the secrets of my heart; he frequently shrugs, and draws up his breath when I pass him as if he was in pain, but I fancy he often appears so with a design to make me think him worse than he really is: I should be very wretched indeed were he as bad as he frequently pretends to be.

Yesterday, he looked so exceedingly dejected, and felt his hand so many times, that I grew quite uneasy, and asked him how it was.

He answered, that it gave him a great deal of pain.

“It has not then been properly taken care of;” said I. “Indeed, Sir Charles,

"Charles, you should have had a
"surgeon at first."

I felt so unhappy while I spoke those words, that he looked at me with compassion; I never wanted it more: my heart was violently agitated, and my spirits, naturally high, you know, sunk in a moment. I was absolutely sick; and instead of leaving the room as I intended, found myself so oppressed, that I could not rise from my chair.

He drew *his* chair towards me, and, leaning over me, asked me what was the matter.

I told him the truth: I told him I was not very well.

He flew, immediately, to the side-board—we were, by ourselves, in the parlour—to fetch some wine and water.—I did not however design to drink any.

Seeing

Seeing him pull the cork out of the bottle, I was cured; for he made use of that hand of which he had so much complained, and with such agility, that I am sure it must have hurt him greatly if it had really been bad.

I started up, quite recovered; thanked him for the trouble he had taken, and assured him that I was better.

"You shall not go then," replied he, catching hold of me with the same hand; "I have long waited to talk with you, and now here is a lucky moment."

"I have long wanted to go," said I, "and shall take this opportunity."

"No, Fanny," answered he, stopping me, "you must not indeed: surely you may give me a quarter of an hour; especially when I suffer so much

“much from my hand: it will be
 “cruel to refuse me.”

He held me so fast that I grew better and better, because I began to think that he could not feel much uneasiness.

“Well then, I *will* stay with you,” said I, “conditionally: you must let
 “me see your hand.”

He paused, a moment, and then replied—“Not for the world: it will
 “frighten you: I know your sensibility, Fanny, and though you will not
 “own that you love me, your tender
 “heart will be touched—You would
 “be grieved to see even an enemy
 “with such a wound as mine.”

Would you believe it, Louisa? his looks and manner of speaking were so adapted to the uneasy sensations which he said he felt, that my silly heart was melted again: it throbbed as if it would
 have

have burst through my stays. He put this very hand upon it. "You are ill again, my dear girl: I wonder you will ask any questions about my hand: I knew how much you would be affected — Come; sit down, we shall, both, be better by and by."

I thought I saw a kind of triumphant smile upon his face: mine, was, consequently, in a glow. I felt myself fluttered, and confused, and would, gladly, have made my escape; but he still held me with the bound-up hand, while the other rested on the back of my chair; so that I could neither look nor stir without having every emotion of my heart guessed at, if not actually discovered. I could not bear this state of confinement, this confinement of my mind as well as of my person: if I had persisted in going from him, he would
either

either have chidden me, or have increased his complaints, and by so doing he would have sharpened my disquiet: I therefore took another method, but it happened to prove worse than the other to which I had recourse.—I fell back in my chair, as if half fainting, on a supposition that my appearance in such a situation would alarm him, and that he would instantly rise and leave me.—Instead of leaving me, he clasped me close in his arms, called me by a thousand tender names, and gave me, I actually believe, as many kisses before I could, with all my resistance, break from him. When I *did* at length disengage myself from his arms, I told him I would never trust myself with him again, and left him abruptly: he ran after me, and begged me only to hear him, but I was deaf to his intreaties. Not that I

had much reason to be so angry as I pretended to be, for though he took a few liberties, he behaved with the greatest delicacy and tenderness; his behaviour, indeed, was too tender, too affecting: I, therefore, hurried away, to avoid the eclairsissement which I dreaded, and to keep up the resentment which the freedoms I have mentioned, however delicately conducted, ought to have excited.

Thus you see, my dear Louisa, how extremely difficult it will be for me to prevent the discovery of my secret by Sir Charles, if I do not fly from him.—Intreat my dearest mother to assist me in conquering an inclination which cannot, without the greatest impropriety, be indulged by her, and your
Affectionate

F. H.
L E T-

L E T T E R LXXIII.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

I Have offended Miss Hume to such a degree that she will not speak to me, if she can any way help it; no, not when there is company with her: her disdain, to those who know nothing of our difference, must appear exceedingly odd, and particular: not all I can say has any effect: it is quite unnecessary to give you a circumstantial relation of our quarrel; the quarrels of lovers are pretty much alike: most people, having heard *ours*, would swear that we doated on each other. Fanny is, however, at present, haughtily distant, and treats me with a sort of contempt which hurts me prodigiously. I have been angry, and I have

been submissive, but in vain: she is just the same; inflexible. Finding that nothing moved her, I told her, this morning, that she was the most refined coquette I had ever met with, and that she thoroughly knew how to trifle with a heart which doated on her; adding, that had I not loved her to distraction, I should have despised her long ago.

Imagine what I felt when I talked to her in this manner: no—you cannot conceive what I endured, at that moment—I could have knelt at her feet; I could have implored her pardon in the most humiliating terms, at the very instant I was abusing her.

To the abuse which I uttered, she, calmly, replied, and with a modest dignity, which made me still more severely repent of what I had said against her—"Since I am so despicable a character,

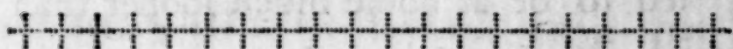
“ racter, Sir, I am surprised that you
 “ ever honoured me with your no-
 “ tice: I shall have the satisfaction,
 “ however,” continued she, “ to be no
 “ longer persecuted by you, as you must
 “ lessen yourself extremely by enter-
 “ taining a thought about me.”

These words she spoke with a particular energy, but discovered neither pride or ill humour: yet I thought I saw her dear eyes filled with tears while she turned, and left me. I cannot bear it. I am unhappy beyond expression. My sighs, my sorrows have no effect upon her: the complaints which I make concerning my hand are disregarded. She even told me that she knew it was better, and that she hoped it was in a way to be well. Thus all my finessing is come to nothing. She carries it with a high hand, and

yet she sometimes is so reasonable in every thing but what relates to my love, that my admiration, esteem, and passion increase every hour. I die with desire to fold her in my fond arms, to press her charming, expressive features to mine, to kiss those dear eyes which once looked so kindly on me, though they are now cruelly averted. For a few decent freedoms I have lost her: and I have no hopes of being restored to her favour. I would do any thing to be in the situation I was before this unhappy difference between us.—I have written to her, I have repeated my supplication to be pardoned: in vain: she will not be reconciled to me. I must, therefore, wait *her* time, and may, perhaps, to compleat my misery, hear of her being married to another man. Are not

not these mortifying disappointments
sufficient to distract the mind of

Your sincere friend C. W.



L E T T E R LXXIV.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir GEORGE
BARTON.

THE more I see of Harriet the
more reason I have to be dissa-
tisfied with her appearance and beha-
viour. She told me, yesterday morning,
that she was engaged to dine with
Mrs. Crofts.

“ I suppose you will return early in
“ the evening? ”

“ Hardly before ten o’clock, I ima-
“ gine,” replied she, with a lowring,
discontented brow.

“ I will meet you here, then, at
“ supper.”

I was at the house a considerable time before she came; we waited supper for her indeed, as my Lady happened to be at home much sooner than usual.

When Harriet arrived she made so new an appearance that I was not only surprized, I was shocked. Her dress was entirely disordered: her hair was half uncurled, and quite unpowdered: her cap hung on one side, her tippet was tumbled, and the pins were out of her gown: in short I hardly ever saw, in a decent family, such a rumpiled figure.—How totally different from Miss Hume, who was dressed with the greatest simplicity, yet with a taste, with an elegance, with a neatness perfectly pleasing.—I positively declare that a girl much less handsome than Fanny or Harriet, tight and tidy, to
make

make use of too very significant feminine expressions, would be preferred by me to the most beautiful flattery in the universe. — Harriet looked *worse* than any flattery: she had the appearance of a loose woman: there was an expression in her eyes not at all to her credit. Her carriage and her looks accorded. I felt myself disgusted with her altogether, but yet I had no opportunity to find fault with her; nor indeed could I, with any delicacy, have complained of her: I shall find a time, however, to let her know my opinion of her new proceedings as soon as possible, because I think I shall not only contribute to my own satisfaction by so doing, but pay her a compliment by acquainting her with my sentiments rather before marriage than after. I am thoroughly convinced that the majority of disagreements between husbands and wives are owing to the

mutual concealments, before their wedding day. All concealments are bad; they are particularly so when two people are united to each other by the strongest ties. There cannot be too much openness between those who wish to be happy in the marriage state.—For *my* part, I see very little hopes of felicity with Harriet. A very great change in her manners there must be to render her desirable to

Yours, &c.

E. D.



LETTER LXXV.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

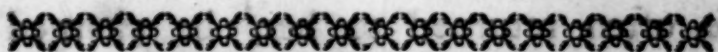
I Have not had a single moment till now to inform you what passed, since you was so considerate as to lend me

me your apartment for a few hours. I could not get away sooner from George: he is a teasing creature: perhaps, I do not like him the worse for being so, as he shews, by such a behaviour, the violence of his passion. I declare I do not know what I shall do with him. He sighs, and tells me that he cannot bear to see his Harriet in the arms of another, and that my cruelty will quite destroy him. I am not in the least cruel, Charlotte, if you knew all. He was, indeed, so eager to give me proofs of his tenderness, that I could not make him quiet a moment, and he kept me so long beyond the hour I promised to meet Sir Edward, that I had not time to set myself in order. Happening to cast my eyes on the glass when Sir Edward rose to go, I was actually surpris'd at my appearance; and I am sure that, tho' we were by our-

selves above half an hour after my Lady and Fanny retired, he never offered to give me a single kiss. No, no; Georgy must be my favourite. Is it not strange, however, that he will not be easy unless I am married to him? He plagues me to death to disappoint Sir Edward, and to run away with *him*. I tell him that things are a great deal better as they are. You will say, I know, that he only wants to make sure of my twenty thousand pounds; but that's all nonsense, for I can furnish him with what sum I please, and I have almost told him so, thinking he would *then* be contented: but there is no satisfying some people—nothing, it seems, will make him quite happy, but my consenting to be his wife: and I cannot, you are very sensible, *now* comply with his request. He would not let me go, last night, till he had
 tied

tied his picture about my neck. I asked
 him what he thought Sir Edward would
 say at the sight of it — He replied,
 “ Pshaw! he won’t see it; I will place
 “ it in that dear snowy bosom, to be hid
 “ from all eyes but my own, and those
 “ of my adorable Harriet.” You see,
 Crofts, what a sweet fellow he is: is
 there any resisting such a man? — How-
 ever, I have no leisure to proceed: I
 can only stay to assure you that I will
 seize the very first opportunity to meet
 him again: pray send to me in time,
 therefore, and you will vastly oblige

Your affectionate H. W.



L E T T E R LXXVI.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir GEORGE
 BARTON.

IT will never do: I must give up
 entirely all farther thoughts of Miss
 Wyndham: between you and I, her be-
 haviour

haviour has for some time past been so very disagreeable to me, that I shall take a final leave of her without any reluctance. The last letter you received from me upon this subject, must have convinced you, that I could not with the least prudence think of such a woman for a wife; and yet I suppressed many circumstances relating to her conduct which I was really ashamed to mention, while I visited her as the woman whom I had engaged myself to marry: nor even now would I unnecessarily expose her; I wish only to justify my own conduct, as I may, from having so often left her, and so often returned to her, be charged with fickleness and caprice: a charge which would hurt me extremely, as I think I have not in this affair shewn myself to be either fickle or capricious. I will therefore set down things exactly
as

as they happened; when you have read my defence, tell me, with your customary impartiality, whether I am, in your opinion, right or wrong. I must only add, that whatever your determination may be, favourable or unfavourable, I will never marry Miss Wyndham.

I told you in my last what an indelicate appearance Harriet made when she returned from Mrs. Crofts's: it disgusted me indeed to such a degree, that I could not look upon her in the light I had done; yet, as she was not, apparently, out of humour with me, I could not decently quarrel with her; and there was no abruptly telling her what I thought of her dress and behaviour.—I went to her therefore the next day, and staid till the evening. She was alone, and half-reclined upon a sofa in a very indolent attitude, tho' dressed with much greater precision

precision than she was the night before, with a slightness, however, in the covering of her neck and bosom, which I did not approve of, tho' it discovered beauties not to be seen without being admired.—The modern fashion of buttoning up the stays to the chin is decent, but it gives an awkwardness and a stiffness to the woman who conforms to it. Mediocrity, George, in every thing, is, certainly best—but there is no moderation in women, I see.

The moment I entered the room, Harriet, with a languishing air, said, “You staid so late, Sir Edward, that I was half asleep with waiting for you.”

“That was to be even with you,” replied I, sitting down by her, and throwing my arm round her waist—Just when I was going to seize a modest kiss,
not

not doubting but that such a favour might be decently granted me, she actually sunk into my arms; leaving her beautiful neck and bosom, with her whole lovely person entirely at my disposal; for I swear I do not believe she would have made any violent resistance if I had been inclined to avail myself of my situation with her; a situation which was very critical: but I am much too bashful, George, I assure you, to succeed with the women: instead of proceeding, therefore, *as far* as I might have done, after having ruffled her pretty handsomely however—(for which I was only gently reprimanded with—“Don’t you, “Sir Edward—be quiet now—indeed “you are ridiculous”—which words were all delivered with broken accents, accompanied with dying eyes, short breathed sighs, encouraging smiles, and looks
which

which spoke a language I wished not to understand) I began to think we might both go *too far*, as the Lady seemed quite ready. I will not pretend to say to what lengths I might have been tempted, had I not just in the dangerous moment thought of concealing the above-mentioned delicious bosom from my sight. I, then, awkwardly enough, wrapped her tippet over it. While I was so employed, my fingers were entangled in a black twist that was fastened to her collar: endeavouring to disengage them, I found a miniature fastened to it. As I knew I had never given her any picture of *me*, I became curious to know whose it was.—On my pulling it up, she started—for she was leaning on my breast—laid both her hands on mine, and cried—“Hold, Sir Edward, what are you about? let my twist alone;”

“you

"you will break it; indeed you will," continued she, striving to force my hands away.

"Be quiet, Harriet," said I, in my turn, "for I *will* see what hangs at the end of this slender thread which sets off the lovely whiteness of your neck."

"Pshaw! but you shall not see it," replied she, pushing me away from her with an increased violence—She really discovered a surprising strength; had she exerted it before in concealing her charming neck, I had never found out her secret. However, I got the better at last. Seizing both her hands in mine, I drew out the picture—To my no small astonishment, it was a striking likeness of Captain Wilkinson—Fire flashed in the eyes of the furious Miss Wyndham. "How dared you, Sir," cried she, with her face covered with blushes, "take such a liberty?"

"ty? but I see to what I had been ex-
 "posed, had I not made a proper resist-
 "ance. A man who will presume to
 "thrust his hands down my bosom, must
 "be impudent enough to do any thing.
 "I am glad, however, that I have made
 "such a discovery Sir."

"Really, Madam," answered I, with
 a very composed air, "you are the person
 "discovered, believe me: when a woman
 "carries about with her in her bosom
 "the picture of one man, at the very
 "time she is going to be married to ano-
 "ther, she cannot be *too soon disco-*
 "*vered.*"

"What insolence?" cried she: "but
 "know, Sir Edward, that the mighty
 "discovery you have made, is just no-
 "thing at all. The Miss Wilkinsons
 "and I have been intimates from chil-
 "dren: I always loved Clara like a
 "sister,

“ sister, and wished to have her picture
 “ for a bracelet; but as she never *sat*,
 “ and as her brother is reckoned vastly
 “ like her, she told me that I should have
 “ *his*, till she could *fit* for herself: add-
 “ ing, that it was no matter whether
 “ she ever *did* sit, if the painter dressed
 “ her brother *en femme*.”

What a pretty story was this invented
 in a moment! Is not invention a *fine*
accomplishment in a wife, Barton?—I can-
 not describe the contempt I felt rising
 in my mind while she related her im-
 probable tale.—When she had finished
 it, I told her, coolly, that the woman
 whom I married, must not be so warmly
 attached either to a male or female friend,
 as to carry their portraits in a place
 where I could only allow her to deposit
 my own resemblance; I told her also
 that I would no longer interrupt the
 pleasure

pleasure she would undoubtedly enjoy in the society of the Captain, and took my leave (my last leave, I may safely say) without feeling the slightest regret.

I would on no account marry Harriet Wyndham; yet I shall be very ready to take a companion for life when I can find a suitable one who will accept of me. A man who is not disposed to lead what is called a life of pleasure—which I look upon, by the way, to be a life of riot and confusion—finds his time hang heavy on his hands without the delightful conversation of a virtuous, agreeable woman, without that soft intercourse, that tender friendship, that delicate intimacy, which can only with a virtuous female companion be met with. Besides, to confess the truth, the freedoms which Miss Wyndham permitted me to take—(freedoms which I could

could not have *hoped* for, situated as we were) have given me such a relish for those which I may *expect* from the woman I love, when the indulgence of them is properly authorised, that I am still more desirous of being acquainted with a woman who has love enough for me to wish to be so circumstanced as not to think the refusal of any favours requested by me necessary; yet, at the same time, discretion enough to be capable of refusing the last, till I have a right to demand it. —Miss Hume, I believe, has all the discretion which I wish to find in a woman; but whether she has an attachment to Sir Charles or not, I cannot say: they appear to be rather cool, and distant in their carriage to each other: however, I will not trust to appearances: I will fairly tell Sir Charles that his sister and I are by no means suitable in our dispo-

dispositions; I will also ask him if he is really under any engagements to Miss Hume: if he is not, I will try my fortune, tho' I have very little reason to hope for success, as Lord H—— has been rejected.

Yours most sincerely,

E. D.

LETTER LXXVII.

Miss WYNDHAM to Mrs. CROFTS.

I Am the most unlucky creature breathing. Sir Edward has discovered Wilkinson's picture; and tho' I invented a lie at the very moment which I thought must have imposed upon such a stupid mortal as he is, it would not do. I cannot pretend to relate all he said upon the occasion; he was so extremely insolent, and I wish not to recollect any of
his

his scandalous expressions. I sent for George directly, and snubbed him heartily for having dared to hang his handsome face about my neck: but he only laughed at me, and said, "Now my charming angel is my own." In short, he will not let me rest a minute till I promise to marry him.—I don't know what resolution to make.—I am almost weary of chiding him: and yet to be plain Mrs. Wilkinfon—the wife of a poor Ensign!—This very day I told him that he must not think of my consent; that I could not bear to see Fanny Hume take place of me.

"She never *can*, my lovely Harriet," replied he; "she has no rank, nor will she ever have any. No man will make her an offer like Lord H——, and he only did it because he was seized with a sudden fancy for her, and

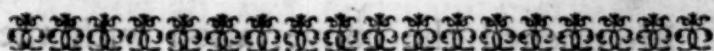
VOL. II. H "thought

“thought the little prude would not
 “yield upon any other terms: but *had*
 “the consented, he would have found
 “out some way to deceive her before
 “the time for finishing the ceremony
 “drew near.—No, my Harriet, men
 “are selfish creatures; angelic women
 “only behave so generously as to marry
 “without equal fortunes.—*You* alone,
 “my charming Miss Wyndham, are ca-
 “pable of such a disinterested beha-
 “viour.”

In this manner is he perpetually talk-
 ing to me: by his insinuating tongue,
 and by his still more insinuating endear-
 ments, he will, I am afraid, talk me
 into the commission of an action of which
 I may, possibly, repent. I have no
 time for reflection: he scarce leaves me
 a moment, and I am forced to conceal
 him in my dressing-room, lest my bro-
 ther,

ther, who has already spoken of my breach with Deerhurst, in terms expressive of great dissatisfaction, should find him out, and quarrel with him for following me. I have but one thing to please me: my brother and Fanny Hume seem to be more indifferent to each other than ever; but then she will be the more ready for Deerhurst—Were I a Dutchess, I should not be able to see that girl a *Lady*; I should hate to see her still attempting to come near me. What then shall I feel if I marry beneath her!—The bare idea is too much for your

H. W.



L E T T E R LXXVIII.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

IN what a torturing state of suspense have I been for these last few days!

H 2

Harriet

Harriet has behaved so foolishly, that Sir Edward has taken a final leave of her: this is but a trifling event to that which followed, tho' it was the foundation of my subsequent uneasiness. While I was almost distracted with that continued coolness and reserve in Fanny's behaviour, Sir Edward sent me a note, in which he desired the favour of seeing me at his own house.

I went immediately, thinking that his request related to the writings, perhaps, which were I knew, drawing, for his marriage with Harriet: *She* was indeed the cause of it.

He opened the conversation with the impossibility of an union between him and my sister, and then begged to know if I was under any engagement to Miss Hume—"Miss Hume," added he, "is, "I believe, thoroughly capable of making—
"ing."

“ing any man happy whom she chuses
“to honour with her hand.”

Struck with his question, I desired
a moment's consideration.—After a short
pause, I replied—“I do not desire to
“equivocate with you, Sir Edward;
“but I confess it pains me to tell
“you, that I have no hopes of pre-
“vailing on Miss Hume to make me
“completely blest.”

“Will you then let *me* endeavour
“to persuade her to listen to my ad-
“dresses: though I cannot reasonably
“expect to be a successful lover, as
“you have been disappointed: so lovely
“a woman *must* certainly marry: and
“if you are not to be her husband,
“you will not, I imagine, make your-
“self uneasy about the man of her
“choice, provided *that* man is able
“to set a proper value upon her heart.”

H 3

“I shall,

“ I shall, undoubtedly,” replied I,
 “ wish to see Miss Hume settled with
 “ a man who is deserving of her; but
 “ yet, Sir Edward, I doat on her to
 “ such an extravagant degree, that I
 “ cannot totally resign all hopes of her,
 “ without suffering the most disqui-
 “ eting sensations. I once flattered my-
 “ self that I had some share in her
 “ heart, but I flatter myself no more.—
 “ Since therefore, she will not be mine,
 “ I will not, I ought not, to hinder her
 “ from being happy with another: it
 “ is, however, impossible for me to tell
 “ you what I shall feel when another is
 “ united to her.—I cannot proceed upon
 “ this subject, Sir Edward; only do me
 “ the favour to inform me as soon as
 “ you can what reception you meet
 “ with.”

He

He assured me that he *would*, expressed the greatest regard for me, and repeatedly told me that he wished to preserve my friendship.

I left him without returning any answer.—How could I promise to be the friend of *him* who was to deprive me of all my happiness!

I hurried home—I would not go to Berkley-Square, nor trust myself with another look at Fanny, imagining that she was certainly going to be Lady Deerhurst. I staid at home, waiting for Sir Edward, in consequence of his promise.

While I sat in a state of painful expectation, I received a letter from my mother to let me know that my sister was no where to be found, and that she fancied she was gone off with somebody; she desired to see me immediately.

This intelligence did not, you may be sure, lessen my perplexity: I guessed that the handsome young adventurer Wilkinson was at the bottom of the affair.

As soon as I came to my mother she shewed me the inclosed letter from that excellent contriver Mrs. Crofts, which arrived just after Harriet's departure, and which *she* had opened to see if it would throw any light upon her daughter's proceedings.

I shall not make any remarks upon this curious epistle, at present, but hasten to relate what is nearest my heart, the enchanting behaviour of my dearest Fanny.

When my mother left me to receive some Ladies whom she did not chuse to admit into her dressing-room, I threw myself upon the sofa, quite overwhelmed

whelmed with a variety of tormenting reflections.

In a very short time Miss Hume entered the room—I just lifted up my eyes, as if I dreaded the sight of her, as she was to be lost to me for ever. Casting them down again hastily, I sighed—deeply sighed.

The dear girl, sitting down by me, said, “I am excessively sorry, Sir Charles, “to see you rendered so unhappy by “the absence of Miss Wyndham.—If “I could, by sharing your affliction, give “you any relief, you should be immediately relieved.”

I raised my eyes again to see if her looks corresponded with her soothing expressions: but immediately imagining that she had already consented to give her hand to Sir Edward, I received no pleasure in gazing at her, in listening to

her kind consolations so freely offered me.—A second sigh—it was a groan—broke from me, while I turned away my head; beginning to fear it almost criminal to behold her lovely person; a person not to be looked at without desire. In a moment I felt her soft hand in mine. “Do not, dear Sir Charles,” said she, in the softest accents, “give yourself quite up to despair: do not refuse every sort of relief: things may not be so bad as we apprehend. Miss Wyndham may have only absented herself with a view of recalling Sir Edward: do, pray think the best.”

I turned, and saw the sweet girl in tears.

“Is it possible, Fanny,” replied I, “that you can imagine me capable of receiving any consolation, when I
“ know

“ know that you are for ever lost to
“ me ? ”

“ How lost,” said she, with the tenderest voice, leaning over me ; “ What do you mean ? ”

“ Have you not consented to be Lady
“ Deerhurst ? ”

“ No, indeed,” replied she. “ I came
“ on purpose to tell you that Sir Ed-
“ ward has done me the honour to
“ make me an offer far beyond my ex-
“ pectations.”

“ And what answer did you give
“ him ? ” said I, eagerly.

“ I told him that I was obliged to
“ him for his good opinion of me, but
“ that I could not accept of his offer.”

“ My dearest girl,” cried I, clasping
her to my bosom, “ you give me new
“ life ; tell me, however, Fanny, why
“ you refused so unexceptionable a
“ man ? ”

“Because I could not,” replied she, throwing down her eyes, and blushing—
“because I could not do him justice :
“because I could not love him as I
“ought.”

“Not love Sir Edward Deerhurst,
“Fanny? a man so truly amiable?”

“He is indeed, Sir Charles, but”—

“But what? Your heart then must
“be engaged to some more happy
“man?”

“Pray do not ask me any more
“questions, Sir Charles,” said she, struggling to get loose—I held her fast, however, to enjoy her charming embarrassment; but finding that I could not make her confess her sensations in my favour, though they were, to my extreme joy, visible in her lovely countenance, I had recourse to a little artifice.—My hand was still bound up: I pretended that in
detain-

detaining her I had hurt it—Letting her go suddenly, I made a horrid wry face, and fetched my breath as if I was in the most excruciating pain.

“Good God!” cried she, “what’s the matter?”

“My hand—I have pressed my hand.”

“Oh! why would you do so?—Tis I who have done it—If I had not come in your way it would not have happened—I would die,” added she, “to alleviate your pain.”

She then burst into tears, and turned from me. I caught her again in my arms, and made her sit down by me while I pulled her dear, soft, weeping face to mine; I kissed away her tears, and bade her no longer deny that she loved me.

“Well then,” said she, blushing like scarlet, and tearing herself from me, “I

“do:

“*do* : but what signifies this confession?”

“I can never be yours.—Is it not better then for us to give up all thoughts of each other?”

“Why so, my life? — Why should we not be happy?—I am at liberty to act as I please.”

“But *I* am *not* at liberty, Sir Charles;” said the excellent girl. “Lady Wyndham, by taking me so early from my mother, has justly acquired the right of a parent over me: I ought not, on any account, therefore, to think of marrying without her approbation: and do you imagine that she will ever permit me to become her daughter? — No—tis impossible. — I must not, dare not expect so great an honour, so great a happiness. Esteem and friendship

“are

“are the only sensations I can venture
“to indulge.”

“And what will you do with your
“love, Fanny?” said I.

“Oh! Sir Charles, do not talk; do
“not think of *that*. Let us, both, for-
“get it.”

“I will sooner forget my existence—
“Never attempt to persuade me to ba-
“nish your affection from my memory:
“to be loved by *you*, Fanny, was the
“first wish of my heart, as soon as I be-
“came acquainted with those amiable
“qualities which distinguish you from
“all other women, not to mention your
“personal charms, which I cannot be-
“hold without rapture.—Do not, there-
“fore, any longer refuse me the satis-
“faction of knowing that I am as ten-
“derly, as ardently beloved, as I
“love.”

I held

I held her fast in my arms while I snatched a number of impassioned kisses. She, at the same time, begged, and earnestly intreated me to let her go; but I had the extreme pleasure to find, by her looks, that she was as much transported as myself in spite of all her efforts to hide her joy. She persisted, however, in refusing to satisfy me verbally in the manner I wished.—Breaking from me, at last, she protested that I should not catch her again: adding, that if I did she would unsay all she had said.

Unable to make her discover her affection for me but in *one* way, I began to complain again of my hand.—Her pity immediately returned, and her pity was I am sure accompanied with her love, though the nobleness of her mind prevented her from declaring her tender
regard

regard for me.—“How could I forget
 “what you told me about your hand,”
 said she, with a look exquisitely affecti-
 onate, while a deep sigh burst from her
 gentle bosom: “let me see it, Sir Charles,
 “and judge, myself, how it is.”

Thinking it cruel to give her any far-
 ther uneasiness, I replied, “Sit down
 “by me, Fanny, and you shall unbind
 “it.”

She complied, but with a general tre-
 mor, which plainly discovered the ap-
 prehensions she felt lest she should give
 me fresh pain. When she saw the
 wound quite healed, she actually changed
 colour from joy. Putting my hand by,
 she said, while her eyes sparkled with
 pleasure, — “Go, you deceiver, go—
 “never will I believe any thing you
 “tell me again.”

“Will

“ Will you not believe me when I
 “ tell you that I adore you, my angel?”

“ Indeed, Sir, you must not talk so
 “ to me.”

“ I *must*, Fanny; and you would
 “ be sorry, my sweet girl, if I *did not*.”

She threw down her lovely eyes, and sighed: then, breaking hastily from me, she ran up stairs: strongly convincing me by her precipitate retreat, that she was afraid to trust herself with me any longer.—However, in spite of all her exalted sentiments she *shall* be mine. Is it fit that *she* who is so much superior to her sex should suffer for the very superiority which renders her so deserving? No—Did I *not* doat on her as I do to excess, did I *not* feel myself utterly unable to live without her, I would now make a point of seeing her settled in a manner suitable to her merit, and agreeable

able to her inclination—Fortunately for my peace, her inclination is fixed on

Your happy friend

C. W.



LETTER LXXIX.

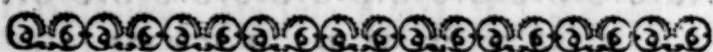
(Mentioned in the foregoing one)

Mrs. CROFTS to Miss WYNDHAM.

YOU have certainly lost your senses, Harriet, or you would neither act nor talk as you do. You have ruined yourself by suffering Deerhurst to slip through your fingers again. Have I not told you a thousand times, that to marry a man with an affluent fortune was the only thing for you? Had you conducted yourself just with sufficient discretion to keep Sir Edward ignorant of your real sentiments concerning Wilkinson, you might have done what you would

would with him; but since you would not hear reason you must e'en take the consequences—It is plain that you prefer your own opinion to that of your

C. CROFTS.



LETTER LXXX.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

SINCE my last we have traced Harriet to Edinburgh; but our scout arrived too late to be of any service: the mischief was done: Harriet is married to Wilkinson, and must, inevitably, be wretched. Do not mistake me by imagining that I think the want of fortune alone on his side must render her so: were he a man of sense, a worthy man, an œconomist, he might, perhaps, make her a good husband in many respects:

spects : but Wilkinson is a loose, wild, extravagant fellow, and has certainly married Harriet merely for her money : however, if he knows any thing of the world, he must know that her fortune will be insufficient to enable them to figure in the manner agreeable to their taste for *appearance*. — But my quarrelling with Harriet will be of no service now : I cannot unmarry her : she will suffer enough for her folly, and so I told my mother.

My dearest Fanny has behaved like an angel upon this occasion.—She has availed herself of all her eloquence to sooth my mother, and to reconcile her to my sister's rash, inconsiderate proceedings.—Poor girl ! I pity her sincerely : she will but too soon find the difference between this giddy young fellow, and the sensible, the accomplished
Deer-

Deerhurst. — How handsomely has *he* conducted himself! how many men would have resented such treatment, and quarrelled with the whole family? He strenuously solicits my friendship. With what openness did he behave with regard to Miss Hume, by first enquiring whether I had any particular design upon her or not? There was a nobleness in his behaviour which has increased my esteem for him. Just after the eclairsissement with Fanny I received a card from him: in that card he told me that she had refused him, though in the gentlest manner, and that he doubted not but *I* was the happy man. He has since made me a friendly visit, and confessed that his disappointment was great. — “I shall bear it better, however,” continued he, “as *you* are the man of her choice; for with *you*, I am sure she
“ must

“ must be happy.” He then spoke very warmly in her praise, and at the conclusion of his encomium, asked me if she had any sisters unmarried: adding, “ If they are like *her*, they cannot but be “ desirable: I have sought for happiness in the female world, in the higher “ walks of life, without being able to “ find it: yet I should not despair of “ it, if I could meet with a woman “ who has the least resemblance to Miss “ Hume, and I think I may expect such “ a woman in her own family.”

I told him she had a sister, who tho’ not like her in person, nor so charmingly sprightly, was young, handsome, modest, sensible, and amiable.

“ An excellent character,” replied he; “ the very woman for a wife.—I should “ be glad, Sir Charles,” added he, after a little hesitation, “ to become ac- “ quainted

“ acquainted with this young lady, if I
 “ could be introduced to her, without
 “ appearing to have desired an inter-
 “ view.”

“ That may be easily accomplished,”
 said I; “ you have nothing to do but to
 “ take a ride into Herefordshire, with a
 “ letter from Fanny in your pocket:
 “ you will be soon acquainted with the
 “ whole family.”

He thanked me for my hint, and de-
 sired me to tell Miss Hume, that being
 obliged to pass through Luton in his
 journey, he would leave a letter for her
 with any of her friends to whom she chose
 to write. He begged me, at the same
 time, not to inform her of the real cause
 of his journey, that his designs might
 not be frustrated.

I assured

I assured him that I would not. As soon as he left me, I went to Fanny, and told her that he was going into Herefordshire, near her mother's, and would take a letter, either to Mrs. Hume, or to Louisa.

She looked earnestly at me while I spoke, paused a moment, and then said, "Why need I trouble Sir Edward, as you are so kind as to supply me with franks?"

"True, my dear Fanny; but I have not a single frank by me at present; he may, therefore, as well take your letter in his pocket."

"If you please"—replied she, and tripped away to write.

After dinner (for I have spent almost every day in Berkley-Square since she has permitted me to believe that I am really dear to her) when my mother

went up to make some alteration in her dress, as she expected company, Fanny put an unsealed letter, addressed to Mrs. Hume, into my hand.

Transported at the charming openness of her behaviour—(what a noble frankness! how I doat on her for it!) I caught her in my arms, and thanked her with a tender embrace: she made a slight, a very slight resistance to it, and then told me, with an enchanting smile, that I should, perhaps, chide her when we met again.

“No, my dearest girl; I am determined *not* to chide you any more,” said I. Then, calling for a candle, to put it out of my power to find fault with the contents of her letter, I sealed it immediately.

Her face glowed with pleasure at this proof of my confidence in her, which she,

she, indeed, well deserved; and she thanked me in the most grateful terms, for my considerate behaviour.

"You have excited my curiosity," Fanny," replied I, "and you have raised my fears; yet I will trust to your honour, my dearest girl and to your love."

"If you depend only upon the first," said she, "you can expect to gain *no* advantage, as *that* is strongly against you; but if you rely upon the last, Sir Charles," added she with a sigh, "you have nothing to apprehend."

This animating confession demanded fresh acknowledgments, but she broke from me before I could finish the delivery of them. However, though she would not stay to listen to the endearing expressions which I lavished on her, she, every now and then, during the evening,

stole glances at me, which made me still more satisfied with her than I had yet been.—With what joy, with what transport do I now write, as I can safely declare that she *loves* me!—Yes, Conyers, her gentle heart is filled with the truest, the most refined tenderness for

Your ever faithful friend,

C. W.



LETTER LXXXI.

Miss FANNY HUME to Mrs. HUME.

SO many unexpected events, my dearest Madam, have happened since my last, that I am at a loss where to begin: though indeed I ought to confine my pen to what relates to myself, as I, of all people, am the least qualified to sit in judgment upon the conduct of others, not being able to exculpate myself

self from the weakness of yielding, perhaps too easily, to the tender esteem, and sincere affection which I have long felt for Sir Charles, and which I cannot, possibly, any longer conceal from him. Besides, my dearest mother, you will, I dare believe, think with me, that I am too much indebted to him to venture the rendering him, a single moment, uneasy, by delaying to communicate what he has so often assured me would relieve him from a state of the most painful suspense. I am sometimes, however, firmly resolved not to return that favour which you and I have, both, received from Lady Wyndham, by accepting of the unmerited honour which her son is desirous of conferring upon me.—I am inexpressibly transported to know that I am in possession of his heart, and I hope to preserve it, by persisting

to refuse the offer of his hand, till Lady Wyndham's approbation authorizes my acceptance of it: but *her* approbation is a happiness which I dare not expect.

Sir Edward Deerhurst, who is so obliging as to desire to be the bearer of this letter to you, also honoured me with the offer of his hand, but I was too well acquainted with the charming qualities of Sir Charles, too sensible of his long and tender regard for me, to listen to his generous proposals: proposals which any woman disengaged, would have thought too flattering to be rejected.

If I have acted against your judgment, my dearest Madam, whom I *should* have consulted, pray forgive me, and impute my omission entirely to the dread I felt of making Sir Charles think that I trifled with *him*, by hesitating about a
 reply

reply to Sir Edward: for such a behaviour I should have been highly censurable, as he has the justest claim to my discretion; for whether I am ever to be so happy as to find myself well received by his family or not, he must ever be the sole possessor of my heart: My heart beats for him alone; but my affection for him, strong as it is, shall not make me injure him in the eyes of his relations, or lessen myself in my own.

Assist me, my dearest mother, with your advice upon this trying occasion, and enable me ever to prove myself

Your obedient daughter,

F. H.

P. S. My best love to my dear Louisa, whom I no longer accuse of too great susceptibility; I have discovered myself to be her own sister; and freely allow her, therefore, to sigh for her favourite.

LETTER LXXXII.

Sir EDWARD DEERHURST to Sir CHARLES
WYNDHAM.

WHAT good angel prompted me to visit the family at Luton! What fortunate star directed me to Mrs. Hume's elegant cottage! Such an adventure, Sir Charles!—But I will proceed in a regular manner, if my agitated spirits will give me leave, to acquaint you with all that has happened to me, since we parted.—I am not naturally a lively fellow, but I am become quite a new creature: I tread in air methinks: but to my tale.

When I arrived at the little white paling at Luton, which incloses the neatest of all dwellings, my servant pulled the bell, and announced me as the friend of Sir Charles Wyndham, who, travel-
ling

ling farther into the country, had brought a letter from Miss Hume to her mother.

This passport immediately procured me an invitation into the house.

When I entered the parlour, I was received by Mrs. Hume with the politeness of a person bred in a court, tho' dressed with the simplicity of an inhabitant of a cottage.

After having enquired after Lady Wyndham, yourself, and her Fanny, she pressed me to take some refreshment. I accepted of her offer, to bring myself acquainted with the family.

She then ordered chocolate, and sent for her daughter Louisa at the same time.

Heaven and earth! what were my emotions when Louisa, with all the elegance of a rural nymph, entered the

room, from the garden, dressed in a white gown sprigged in colours from flowers in her own *parterre*: a little hat lined and bound with green shaded her fair face; a face which I immediately recognized to be the dear one which I had so languished to see again; and the sudden appearance of it affected me so much, that I made an exclamation of surprise and joy.

The lovely girl turned, instantly, as pale as death, and was, hastily, going to quit the room, tho' her tender limbs could hardly support her; so greatly was she also affected by the recollection of her partner.

Mrs. Hume, astonished, and concerned at the sudden alteration in her daughter's countenance, cried, "What's the matter, my Louisa?"

"Nothing,

"Nothing, Madam," replied the sweet girl, and fainted in my arms, as I had hurried to her to prevent her falling.

I carried her to the sofa; her mother assisted me in recovering her. When she began to shew signs of returning life, Mrs. Hume intreated me to withdraw, a moment, into the next room, as she found, she said, that her daughter's disorder was occasioned by the sight of *me*, who resembled, she supposed, somebody whom she knew, and whom she did not expect to see.

I complied, not only to oblige Mrs. Hume, but to hear the undisguised account of the effect which my unexpected presence had on Louisa's heart, the gentlest in the world, from her own lips.

I soon heard her mother question her about me: she replied, that I was ex-
1 6 tremely

tremely like the gentleman with whom she danced two years ago at R——, and who had behaved in a very particular manner to her: that I not only looked like him, but spoke like him.—“I am
 “sorry, however, Madam,” continued she, “that I have exposed myself so much
 “to a stranger; but as he could not
 “know the real cause of my confusion,
 “he will, I hope, impute it to an in-
 “stantaneous illness.”

She delivered these few words in a faint but pleasing voice. Her good mother answered, “Compose yourself, my
 “dear child, and all will be right.”

“She then came in to *me*, and told me
 “that her daughter had not been very
 “well, and that she hoped I would ex-
 “cuse her behaviour.”

“I cannot, but upon these conditions,
 “Madam,” said I: “you must give me
 “leave

“leave to make her mine, and endeavour to prevail on her to accept of me.—I have, it is true, been rejected by Miss Fanny; but I had not the pleasure then of meeting with Miss Hume, an old acquaintance, I believe, of whom I have long been in search.”

I then, as concisely as I could, informed Mrs. Hume who I was, and with what view I had called at her house.

Fanny’s letter was sufficient to prove the identity of my person; and I, presuming upon *that*, intreated her to let me return to Miss Hume.

“Let me first prepare her to receive you, Sir,” said she.

I consented, as the dear girl’s health and safety were become of infinite consequence to me.

In

In a few minutes I was introduced into the room to which my Louisa had retired.—Her face glowed on my approach: she rose, and attempted to apologize for her disorder.

I told her, in reply, that the cause of it was a sufficient excuse; adding, that her being so much affected at the sight of me, after so long a separation, was too flattering a compliment not to be highly valued.

She blushed, and bowed; and we soon came to a right understanding; but as *you*, Sir Charles, must be rather in the dark about this discovery, it will be necessary to clear up the mystical part of the affair.

About a year before I went abroad, I was, one day, at Cambridge engaged with a party of young fellows to spend
the

the evening with a friend of one of them, at the next village. We were cheerfully received; and when somebody proposed to conclude the entertainment with a dance, the proposal was readily agreed to: as there were not Ladies enough, however, to complete the set, the gentleman of the house sent to a farmer's just by, with a request to the two Ladies who lodged there to partake of our diversion. They came: the elder Lady refused to dance, herself, but the lovely young one fell to *my* happy lot; and I can truly say, that I never was so struck with the person, conversation, and whole carriage of any girl in my life. There was a winning modesty in her mien and manners, a charming delicacy in her appearance, which attracted me prodigiously—I was, indeed, so much delighted with her, that I could not help disclosing

sing

sing the passion which she had kindled, by every look, word, and motion—None of my looks, words, and motions, seemed to displease her, tho' she discovered the satisfaction she felt with the greatest timidity, as if she was afraid of going beyond the limits of discretion. I had intended, tho' fearful of giving offence by so doing, to have asked her her name, and place of abode; but the dance ended before she and I (engaged in a conversation—a conversation in which I discovered new graces in her) were in the least aware of it, and she was hurried from me before I could sufficiently recollect myself to make enquiries so necessary to my peace.—However, when I took leave of the family who had so agreeably entertained us, I desired to know the name of the young Lady with whom I had danced, and where she lived :

lived: I was informed that her name was Lewis, and that she and her mother boarded at the farm-house on the other side of the road; it was too late to go thither that night; but I rode over the next morning with a design to pave the way for a farther acquaintance, by the usual compliments paid to Ladies after having danced with them.

On my arrival, I asked for Mrs. Lewis, and was told by the farmer and his wife that she went from thence early that morning—I then asked them whither they were gone: “They did not know”—I offered them any sum to obtain the wished-for information — “*They did not know*”—or *would not know*. They could only tell me that Mrs. Lewis had lodged and boarded with them three months; that Miss, who was her neice, had been with her but a week upon a visit; that they
went

went in a chaise to the next town, and that they were set down at a shop. This was all the intelligence I could learn.— I then desired the farmer to let his servant go with me, and shew me the shop. He complied with my request. When I came there, the people did not even know their names: two Ladies, they said, called early in the morning, bought some odd things, and went away: they could give no other account of them. I staid the whole day in that town walking about, looking at every house and window, and asking if any Ladies, with the names of Lewis, had been there; but to no purpose: no such people were to be found.

Here *my* tale ends—take the continuation of it from Mrs. Hume.

“ My sister, Sir Edward, whose name
 “ is Lewis, and who generally lives a
 “ few

“ few miles on this side of Cambridge,
“ having been in a very declining state,
“ was advised by her physician to try
“ change of air: in consequence of that
“ advice, she took an apartment at the
“ farm-house to which you went to en-
“ quire after Louisa. There she lodged
“ and boarded, and soon grew better;
“ and there I made her a visit with my
“ daughter, and, at her request, left
“ Louisa behind me. In about a week
“ Mrs. Lewis brought her home in a
“ post-chaise, that I might take care of
“ her, she said, as she had, at a dancing
“ in the neighbourhood, met with a very
“ agreeable young man who appeared
“ very much taken with her, and behav-
“ ed in so particular a manner to her,
“ as to please and affect her greatly.—
“ Knowing that first impressions,” add-
ed she, “ are often attended with dan-
gerous

"gerous consequences, when young wo-
 "men are not upon an equality with their
 "admirers in point of family and fortune;
 "I hurried her away the following morn-
 "ing to the next town. After having
 "stopped at a shop there, I sent the
 "farmer's man home with the chaise,
 "and purchased a few things. We then
 "walked on till we met a returned post-
 "chaise which brought us to Luton."

By this proceeding of Mrs. Lewis's,
 I lost my Louisa, on whose gentle heart
 I made, it seems, so deep an impresson,
 that she has refused the addresses of every
 man from that time. This agreeable
 information her mother gave me, and
 she, herself, confirmed it with her own
 dear lips, with a modesty, and a tender-
 ness not to be described.

Thus you see, Sir Charles, I, who
 thought myself a little while ago a very
 unlucky

unlucky fellow, am become the most fortunate of men—and as I shall ever remember with pleasure that I am indebted to *you* for the recovery of my Louisa; you may be assured, that gratitude will add considerable strength to the friendship which has already subsisted between us.

I am, my dear Sir Charles,

Your very sincere friend,

And obliged humble servant,

E. D.

P. S. You must give me leave, by your means, to present my respectful compliments to Miss Fanny Hume, whom I hope, ere long, to call my sister: believe me, Sir Charles, I shall feel my happiness greatly increasing, by having the honour to rank you among my relations, as well as among the most valuable of my friends.

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

Miss FANNY HUME to Miss HUME.

JOY to you, my dear Louisa! what happiness must you feel in finding your unknown admirer to be so desirable a man as Sir Edward Deerhurst! Happy am I to think, my dear sister, that my refusal of an offer, which I could not, indeed, consistently with honour and justice, accept of, has brought about so unexpected, so agreeable an event! Yet, while I rejoice at your felicity, I may sigh without envying you for it—I sigh, my dear, because I cannot make the man whom I sincerely, and with the greatest reason, love, as happy as you will, I doubt not, ever make Sir Edward.

Sir Charles shewed me Sir Edward's letter; and I have received one from
my

my mother, much to the same purpose, to which I will soon dispatch an answer.

Sir Charles tells me, that his mother cannot *now* make the smallest objection to my union with him, as your alliance with Sir Edward will certainly reconcile her to it, tho' he kindly says that I want not *that*, or any thing else to recommend me. He says, indeed, so many kind and generous things to me, that I sometimes wonder how I can still hold out, and reject what alone can give me happiness; but it is the sincerity of my affection for him, which obliges me to consult his honour, rather than the indulgence of my own inclination. Had he no family, I should not have so many scruples—but while I think that those very nearly related to him may be hurt by my coming among them, I am more disposed to refuse his hand than to accept
of

of it.—How can I make so ungrateful a return to my Lady for all her kindness to me! Sir Charles, himself, would, perhaps, when the first flow of passion was over, repent of having ranked me among his relations.—These are the reflections, my dear sister, which frequently force sighs from me, even when I am in the midst of the most joyful scenes, tho' I am transported, beyond expression, to know that Sir Charles does not look upon life as life without me.

Miss Wyndham is become Mrs. Wilkinson. She is returned from Edinburgh: she has sent for her brother, and desired him to soften my Lady in her favour, who does not appear exceedingly concerned at her daughter's *unexpected* behaviour: for tho' every body knew that she was very intimate with Captain Wilkinson, nobody, I believe, had any
idea

idea of her marrying him. I am glad my Lady is not very angry with her: it is better, upon such occasions, to forget and forgive.—It would be cruel, indeed, to desert her at the very time she most wants a kind friend. Matrimony is a serious affair, even when we are united to the man of whom we have the highest opinion, and whom we most sincerely love.—I have always wondered at the rash conduct of those Ladies, and at their indelicacy also, who fly from their relations, and put themselves under the protection of men whose motives they have no reason to believe, from their behaviour, to be commendable.—How many unthinking women have been ruined by such imprudent proceedings! How happy are you, my dear Louisa, who, with a very susceptible heart, have ever acted under the guidance of discretion!

and who have shewed your understanding and taste, by giving your heart to one of the most respectable men in the world. I confess I feel myself rise in my own opinion, when I think of Sir Charles's uncommon merit, and cannot help exulting in my choice: it is his excessive tenderness alone which, at present, keeps up the spirits of

Your ever-affectionate F. H.

P. S. Pray return my respectful compliments to Sir Edward, to whom I wish all possible happiness.

L E T T E R LXXXIV.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

SINCE you called on me in town, and heard the little *denouement* of Sir Edward's affair with Miss Louisa Hume—

Hume—an affair on which I never reflect without the sincerest pleasure, as it has not only secured me the possession of Fanny, but very agreeably paved the way for my marriage with her—my sister arrived in London. She sent me a card, as Mrs. Wilkinfon, to desire to see me.—I went immediately to her.

I found her in that sort of confused style which one naturally expects to meet with in a young Ensign's apartments: ready furnished lodgings: there was a looseness in her dress, and a freedom—almost a fierceness—in her air, which I was sorry to behold, as she was my sister: yet I could neither chide her—being thoroughly sensible, myself, of the omnipotence of love, nor refuse to do my utmost to forward a reconciliation between her and my mother. In return, I desired her to endeavour to

persuade my mother, after having been restored to her favour, to approve of my union with Fanny Hume. "How, Sir Charles!" said she, reddening with pride and envy; "surely you will not think of degrading yourself by marrying so low-born a girl as Fanny Hume; a girl whom my mother took into her house out of charity, and who had much better have perished in the street, than have come to nose us, by thrusting herself into our family."

Shocked and surprised at hearing her talk in this manner, I could not restrain my anger—I asked her, with some asperity, how *she* who had already degraded herself and her family, by eloping with an officer of an inferior rank in the army, who had nothing but his pay for his subsistence, dared to censure *me* for solicit-

soliciting an alliance with the daughter of one of the bravest men in the King's service, who had died fighting for his country, and who left his children with sentiments noble as his own; graced with every virtue, and particularly blessed with a discretion sufficient to prevent their running away with any men, tho' in every respect superior to Irish Ensigns.—“Content yourself, therefore, with your own choice, Mrs. Wilkinson,” added I, “nor venture to breathe another flighting syllable against the most amiable creature in the world, who can derive no honour from me, but who will, on the contrary, confer a dignity upon me of which I shall, without *her*, be destitute.”

With these words I left her, and returned to the dear girl whom she had tried, but in vain, to lessen in my eyes.

I found her in a pensive attitude, sitting; leaning her head on her hand; and jogging one foot over the other.

I sat down by her, and threw my arm round her before she saw me.

She started, and blushed; and then resumed her former attitude, without speaking a word; but the looks which she cast on me were full of exquisite tenderness.

I seized this moment to plead for the supreme happiness of calling her mine for ever, and availed myself of all the eloquence which love inspired.

She hardly made an answer, at first: a gentle sigh now and then heaved her lovely bosom: I considered her sighs as indubitable proofs of her affection; and finding her, as I imagined, no longer able to make any resistance, either to my endearments, or to refuse her consent

sent to the completion of my wishes, I pressed her in my arms, and told her that I insisted upon her immediate compliance, as Sir Edward and Louisa, I added, would be married before us, if she did not speedily prepare matters.

Starting, suddenly, from me, tho' I saw reluctance strongly painted in her face, she replied, while I attempted to seize her again, "Let me go, Sir Charles; I will hear no more upon this subject."

"Positively, then," answered I, quite out of humour at the continued coyness of her behaviour, "you are the greatest prude in nature; and I will never believe you ever felt the least tenderness for me."

"You may believe, as you please," replied she, coolly; "but I must be of a different opinion, and always think

“ that I give you the most convincing
 “ proof of my love when I refuse to
 “ lessen you in the eyes of your family,
 “ by consenting to your marriage with
 “ a girl who is indebted for her sub-
 “ sistence to your mother’s charity.”

“ You *must* think as you please, Miss
 “ Hume,” answered I, hurt by her in-
 sufferable composure ; “ but let me tell
 “ you, that you carry your ideas of dis-
 “ interestedness and generosity to a most
 “ romantic height, and that virtues may
 “ be strained into vices. However,
 “ since it is not in my power to make
 “ any change in your absurd sentiments,
 “ I must look out for a woman who is
 “ suitable to me, whose way of think-
 “ ing is like my own. I once flattered
 “ myself that Miss Hume was the only
 “ woman in the world whom I could
 “ possibly love ; but I would sooner pe-
 “ rish,”

“rish,” added I, eargerly, “than marry
“a woman who can be so indifferent
“about me.”

She made no answer for some time, but sat, looking at the carpet: her dear bosom heaved with the agitation which I had occasioned. This was the time to finish the business at once. I let her sit till I perceived her poor heart ready to burst with a variety of emotions.

Then advancing towards her with the greatest coolness I could throw out into my looks, I said, “Here then we break
“off our acquaintance for ever, Miss
“Hume; for I will not pretend to be
“such a Stoic as to be capable of con-
“versing with the woman, on whom I
“have so fondly doated, without ex-
“pecting any return but her indiffe-
“rence, or, at most, her esteem.”

To this decisive speech she replied, in a soft, but tremulous voice, tears falling in large drops from her eyes at the same time, " You must do as you please, Sir
" Charles: no woman can love a man
" more than I have loved *you*.—I still
" love you; I shall always love you,
" though you have taken leave of me
" for ever.—Yet—"

Here the contending passions overpowered her, they stopped all farther utterance: she could only express her feelings with her tears.

My heart was torn in pieces to see her so deeply distressed: I was the more pained, as I had, myself, so distressed her.

Sitting down by her again, I threw my arm round her, and said,—“ Tell
“ me, Fanny, when you are able to
“ speak, tell me what more you had to
“ say :

“ say : what did you mean by that
 “ *Yet?*”

She turned her weeping eyes towards me, and said, “ I meant, that though I
 “ loved you more than any woman, per-
 “ haps, loved a man, yet I would never
 “ be yours without Lady Wyndham’s
 “ consent ; if that cannot be obtained,
 “ we must then—part for ever.”

You may easily conceive my reply : I had few doubts concerning my mother’s approbation, as Sir Edward Deerhurst is on the point of marrying Louisa : but till this happy moment Fanny always protested that she would not be mine, though my mother *should* give her consent : and I really believe she would have kept her word, so exalted are her sentiments : and yet so sincere is her affection for me, that though she could hardly disengage herself from my arms,

and even forbore to return my endearments, she persisted in conquering herself, and left me, notwithstanding all my efforts to detain her: saying, that she had a letter to write to her mother.—What amazing discretion! It shall be amply rewarded.

IN CONTINUATION.

I waited, with the most eager impatience for my mother's coming home. As soon as she arrived I hurried into her dressing-room. I found her very much pressed for time, having a number of engagements upon her hands, every one of which was of more importance to her than her son's happiness: however, I, at last, prevailed upon her to dismiss her train of hair-dressers, waiting-women, &c. and to listen to me.

She

She was so considerate as to hear all I had to say in Fanny's favour; and then told me, that since I had a mind to play the fool as my sister had done, she did not know who could hinder me.

This answer, you will say, was a sanction: but it did not satisfy *me*. I could not bear to have my union with the most deserving woman in the world, looked upon in a despicable light. I therefore proceeded a little farther, and incroached upon her ladyship's time, in order to point out the propriety of Fanny's conduct: and I expatiated so much upon it, that she began to grow quite restless, merely to get rid of me, I believe, that she might allot more time to her *fashionable attendants*: she gave me leave, however, to bring Fanny to her before dinner.

I re-

I returned in raptures to my lovely girl.—Her spirits were violently fluttered.

I flew to her. She met me with looks at once tender and bashful: her tenderness seemed to be predominant, but its appearance was under the correction of that amiable delicacy by which she always so charmingly distinguished herself.

“Now you are all my own, Fanny,” cried I, embracing her: “my mother has resigned all authority over you: but you may, perhaps, still have doubts, my love; let me, therefore, lead you to her, that your doubts may be all removed.”

“Spare me a moment, Sir Charles,” said the dear creature; “my heart is so full of gratitude and pleasure that I
“ am

"am not able to thank her as I ought."

I was glad, you may be sure, of an opportunity to talk with her, alone, upon a subject on which she had so often forbade me to speak, but to which she now began to listen with a delight equal to my own. I became, indeed, so much intoxicated with it, that I detained her till my mother had quite finished her dress. I then presented Miss Hume to Lady Wyndham, telling her, that I wished to receive my Fanny from *her* hands.

"Why need I give her to you again?" said my mother, with a half smile.

"I cannot have her too often," answered I.

My mother then held out her hand: I put Fanny's into it, and she joined mine with it—My dear girl attempted to
make

make the most grateful acknowledgments, but the words died upon her tongue: she could only say, "I would thank you, Madam, for all your goodness to me, but I have only tears left."

My mother, to her honour I mention it, seemed to be affected. After having softly said—"Poor Fanny," she added, aloud, "she was always a good girl: but take her away, Charles, and make her chearful: the girl was a lively girl before you became acquainted with her; this love spoils every body."

Fanny seized her hand, and kissed it; and replied, "I should be totally unworthy of all your favours, my dear Madam, did I not feel the sincerest affection for Sir Charles."

I was not, you may imagine, an idle spectator; my Fanny's tenderness was suffi-

sufficiently observed by me.—My mother putting us by with her hand, said, laughing, “Go, go, you are a couple of sim-
“pletons.”

My dear creature is now quite happy: she scruples not, now, to confess how very dear I am to her, and how long I have been so.—I am going to write to Mrs. Hume, and to Sir Edward: I shall tell Sir Edward that *we* will be married on the same day with him, that we may set off happily together, and save trouble in the family; for my mother, I presume, has not a great deal of leisure to bestow upon, what she will call, idle ceremonies. She has informed me, that she will go down, and give Mrs. Hume joy on the disposal of her girls. I have desired her, however, to stay till our wedding-day: being fully persuaded, that if she goes now, we shall not get her to go again in a hurry:

a hurry: and no man can be in greater haste to be happy than

Your very sincere friend,

C. W.



LETTER LXXXV.

Mrs. WILKINSON to Mrs. CROFTS.

YOUR intelligence, last night, was but too true: Sir Edward Deerpurft, after having made propofals to Fanny Hume, which ſhe refufed, is actually going to be married to her ſiſter, a mere country girl, who has not yet, I believe, ever ſeen London.—No wonder I did not ſuit him, as he can take up with ſuch an awkward mawkin! But what is worſe, my brother, for whom Fanny Hume kept herſelf, is to be married to her on the ſame day. Ridiculous! What prepoſterous matches do ſome people make!

make! How I hate and despise her: and yet she must rank before *me* every where: that is insupportable. She will nose me every where—'Tis a monstrous thing I declare, that such attention is paid to a title, when we see so many upstarts get at them, nobody knows how: people of *family*, alone, ought to be regarded, as *that* cannot be bought or sold, but must ever retain its intrinsic value. How I rave about things of no consequence compared with those which destroy my peace! George, I am afraid, will, by his behaviour, verify your prediction concerning him: he is excessively extravagant, and will not, I fear, be faithful. He begins, I think, already to fall off: he is less attentive to me, less solicitous about pleasing me, less fond: he is frequently absent: he has, indeed, slept twice from me, on the most trifling pre-

pretences imaginable. He did not tell me the truth, you may be assured. I'll lay my life he has an engagement with some other woman: not that I am jealous neither, Charlotte; for tho' I think the fellow handsome, there are other men as handsome as he is; but it hurts my pride to know that other women are preferred to me: yet I suppose all husbands are so, except those extraordinary creatures, Sir Edward, and *my* wife brother: and it may perhaps, be convenient to have them so, as they then leave us free to retaliate. I could never have endured Deerhurst's prying disposition: he would have been always with me, always after me; quite an *English* husband: and yet, between ourselves, Crofts, I wish I had taken *him*: for with a little management I could have done what I pleased with him; I could, at least, have brought

brought him to leave me mistress of my time: but I was in too great a hurry; had I followed your advice, I might have kept them both: tho' indeed it was George's ridiculous behaviour which undid me. Afraid of losing me or my fortune—(my fortune, I believe, was the chief object he had in view) he would not let me rest till I complied with all his wishes: by so doing he alarmed Sir Edward's jealousy to such a degree, that there was no possibility of keeping him: but George must alter his present conduct, or I shall soon let him know that I expect very different treatment.

By Sir Charles's intercession—how I hate to owe any thing to him!—Lady Wyndham consented to see me.

She told me that I had been a greater fool than my brother.—That last expression was the only one which pleased me.

me. I was contented to be called *fool*, as my brother was *honoured* with the same appellation.

Fanny Hume—how I detest her!—came in to pay her respects to me—as she called it—though I know she despises me. To be contemptible in *her* eyes!—Insupportable!

George—who has behaved in a mighty free, easy manner to all women since his marriage—kissed her more heartily, I thought, than was necessary; and Miss *chose* to be offended at his freedom.—I, therefore, *chose* to reprove *her*, though I could have knocked *him* down for appearing so fond of every other woman. What business has such a girl as *she* to find fault with the behaviour of any of *our* family? She took the *Lady* upon her too soon indeed, and so I told her. She coloured, and said she begged
my

my pardon, but she looked provoked at us both: I am sure she had no reason to be offended with George, and so I desired her to go and tell my brother. She made me no answer, but turned the conversation; sat a little while, and then left us. George went down stairs with her. I told him, when he came up again, that he was extremely officious when there was no occasion—He had the assurance to say, that he could not be rude to a pretty woman; and that Miss Hume was the best bred, best humoured creature in the world. She is to be preferred by every body then, you perceive, to *me*.—If this is matrimony, I have quite enough of it. I wish I had remained as I was before I knew Wilkinfon, who has found his account in his alliance with me; and his sisters also, who are always here, have reaped no inconsiderable

able advantages from their connection
with

Your ever sincere

H. WILKINSON.



LETTER LXXXVI.

SIR EDWARD DEERHURST TO SIR GEORGE
BARTON.

HOW widely different is my present situation, near my dear Louisa, from that in which I was when I solicited the hand of Miss Wyndham! I find myself in a new world: every thing smiles around me, and my lovely girl makes it her whole study to please me. She dedicates her whole time to me; and expresses her affection, her gratitude, her warmest wishes to promote my felicity, in the most charming manner imaginable. I am also very much pleased
with

with Mrs. Hume; she is a sensible, polite woman, and has proved herself an exemplary mother.—Such a mother poor Harriet always wanted: for tho' Lady Wyndham has but few faults, consider'd as a woman of the World, she is of too trifling a disposition, too volatile, too much addicted to company and cards. She was ever, indeed, too fine a Lady to attend properly to the education of her daughter. Mothers, when they have daughters arrived to a certain age, should make no attempts to be *captivating*; they should content themselves with the *esteem* of our sex, and not discover a propensity to raise the *tender passions*. Beauty, alone, is a superficial accomplishment; it may strike the eye, but it will never win the heart if it is not accompanied with attractions of a more permanent nature. My Louisa's attrac-

tions are by no means confined to her person: but she appears particularly alluring in my eyes by the extreme delicacy of her every look, her every word. She loves me, she doats on me, yet I am sure she would sooner give me up for ever—painful as the resignation might be—than either encourage, or permit me to take the slightest liberty with her of an improper kind. With a woman of so delicate a turn, a man may be safe even in this licentious age, and that is saying a great deal.

Sir Charles has, in a letter to Mrs. Hume, asked her consent to marry Miss Fanny: it was accompanied with one to *me*, in which he informed me that he has prevailed upon her to make him happy, on the same day I am to be blest with my Louisa. — My dear Louisa has intreated her mother and me to let the
cere-

ceremony be performed at *Luton*, to avoid the bustle, and stare of a publick wedding. There is so much good sense, and modesty in her request, that it *must* be complied with: and I shall request the favour of Lady Wyndham's company here with Miss Fanny and Sir Charles, being impatient to unite the *brother* to the *friend*.

In a few days after the marriage ceremonies are over, we shall return to London* to pay our respects to Lady Wyndham (who has ever been very kind to Mrs. Hume and her family) if she does not favour us with her presence here, and then take leave of it for the remainder of the summer, and spend our time with each other alternately, at our respective estates in Dorsetshire and Wiltshire; always desiring Mrs. Hume to be with us, who will, however, still keep her cottage to return to whenever she pleases.

This is my plan, George—Is it not an eligible one? I think I can venture to affirm that you will approve of it. I have only to wish that Mrs. Hume had another daughter to dispose of, that you might share the happiness of

Yours, most sincerely,

E. D.



L E T T E R LXXXVI.

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM to Colonel
CONYERS.

MY felicity is hourly increas-
ing; not only from the now cheer-
fully avowed, tender affection of my
Fanny, but from the extreme goodness
of her heart, and her uncommon dis-
cretion.

Yesterday she desired leave to pay her
respects to my sister, as the daughter of
her

her benefactress, as the sister of her generous dear Sir Charles, as she was pleased to call me.

Neither my mother nor I opposed so proper a civility, dictated by gratitude and generosity.

When she came home from Mrs. Wilkinson she seemed to be more serious than she was at her setting out: but she said nothing of what had passed, nor did she make a single observation on my sister's behaviour, or manner of life. None of my questions, repeatedly addressed to her (for I was well acquainted with Harriet's flippancy) could draw anything from her of the censorious kind.

This morning I met Wilkinson in the Green Park: we are always civil: I would, indeed, do him any friendly office, for poor Harriet's sake, who is, every way, hurrying to ruin; but there is

no serving a man who will not in the least help himself; who, on the contrary, will render ineffectual every attempt you make to serve him. It is a difficult matter to say which is most glaring, his thoughtlessness, or his extravagance.—I met him flying along with two fine women, who seemed loth to part with him even while he spoke a few words to *me*, which were to apologize a little for Harriet's rudeness to Miss Hume. I replied, that Miss Hume had said nothing of it to me: “I am sure,” added I, “that she never will mention it to me, and therefore intreat you to tell me.”

“Why faith, Sir Charles,” answered he, “I took the liberty of a *brother* to kiss my pretty *future* sister, when she very handsomely wished me joy on my marriage.—The little prude resented my freedom; my wife, in consequence
“ of

“of her resentment, was saucy to her,
“and drove the poor girl out of the
“house: I followed her down, however,
“tho’ much against Harriet’s will, to
“beg her pardon.”

“Enough, Mr. Wilkinson,” said I,
(I could have murdered the fellow for
his insolence) “but she shall come no
“more to be insulted by either of you.”

“Lard, Sir Charles,” cried he, “I
“meant nothing by my soul, and yet I
“shall ask your pardon if you require
“it; for let me die if I had not a thou-
“sand times rather have married Fanny
“than Harriet, only you know I am
“such a poor devil, that I could not
“have kept her.”

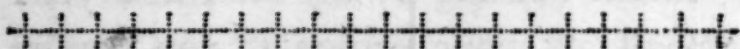
What a giddy coxcomb!

When I told Fanny on my coming
home what he had said to me, she re-
plied, with her accustomed good humour,

that it was not worth minding; —“ I
 “ shall keep out of the Captain’s way
 “ for the future,” added she—“ I have
 “ too tender a regard for my dear Sir
 “ Charles, to take any thing amiss from
 “ his sister.” What an angel!—I am
 going to hasten preparations.—I shall
 soon be the happiest of men—I shall
 ever be

Your sincere friend,

C. W.



LETTER LXXXVII.

Mrs. WILKINSON to Mrs. CROFTS.

LET me ever forget the fatal day—
 for ever be blotted from my me-
 mory the fatal hour when Sir Edward
 Deerhurst deserted me.—Oh! Charlotte!
 I was last night at Ranelagh with Clara
 and Bell Wilkinfon, and a crowd of
 their fellows. There was, on a sudden,
 a great

a great bustle:—Turning about, I saw Deerhurst and my brother with their two wives ridiculously parading along arm in arm, so fond, so fulsomely fond—I was quite sick at the sight of them, and could have driven them “far as the poles asunder.” Oh! for a whirlwind to blow them millions of leagues from each other! Were Sir Edward——how I detest his title, as I cannot share it with him—yet were *he* unmarried—I am not—but I undid myself by first driving Deerhurst from me, and then listening to this insinuating fellow Wilkinson, who leaves me for every other woman who comes in his way, and spends my fortune in dressing to make himself captivating to all the wives and widows who can afford to fill his purse, for the sake of his person.—What a contemptible creature is he compared with Deerhurst, who had every thing to re-commend

commend him, and with whom I might have now been happy, had it not been for *your* detestable advice, Mrs. Crofts: it was *you* who cautioned me against being that tame animal a *household dove*; it was *you* who persuaded me to exert a proper spirit to support my prerogative, and it was your execrable example which completely ruined me; let every woman, therefore, who wishes to *keep her lover*, shut her ears against the envious, malicious, diabolical admonitions of her own sex, which must inevitably make her behave in such a manner as to *lose him*.



THE END.

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